American West

The land and its people

March/April 1982 $3

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Desert landscapes by Barry Lopez
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California houses of gold
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Frank Matsura, northwest photographer

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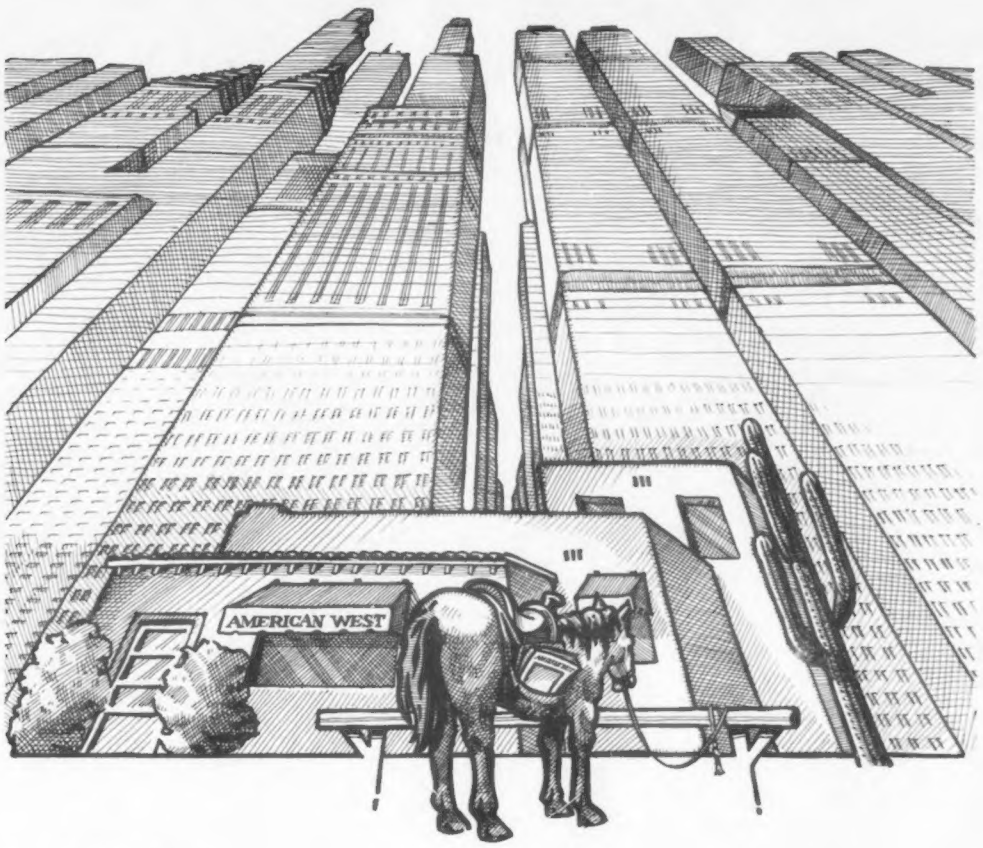

ILLUSTRATION BY M. HARDESTY

To: Our complimentary copy folks

AMERICAN WEST arrives in the Big Apple!

You might say that we've taken Horace Greeley's dictum to young men and turned it around. AMERICAN WEST is moving east. In February we celebrated the opening of our new sales office in New York City under the direction of Jonathan Stone. Our East Coast office is now handling our national sales accounts.

But we didn't stop there. Due to the tremendous growth of AMERICAN WEST in the past year, we've also made significant additions to our staff in Tucson. Sands Spencer has joined our team as a sales representative for art galleries. Lisa Poglianich is directing our promotions and public relations.

Of course, all of this would not be possible without the strong support of our advertisers and the patronage of their products by our readers.

We are particularly proud to publish the names of the following advertisers who have joined our growing 1982 list and are advertising in AMERICAN WEST for the first time this issue:

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With our circulation now over 100,000, AMERICAN WEST offers you a total audience of nearly 400,000 readers. Our May/June issue closes March 12; so, let's hear from you soon. Enough said. Enjoy AMERICAN WEST.

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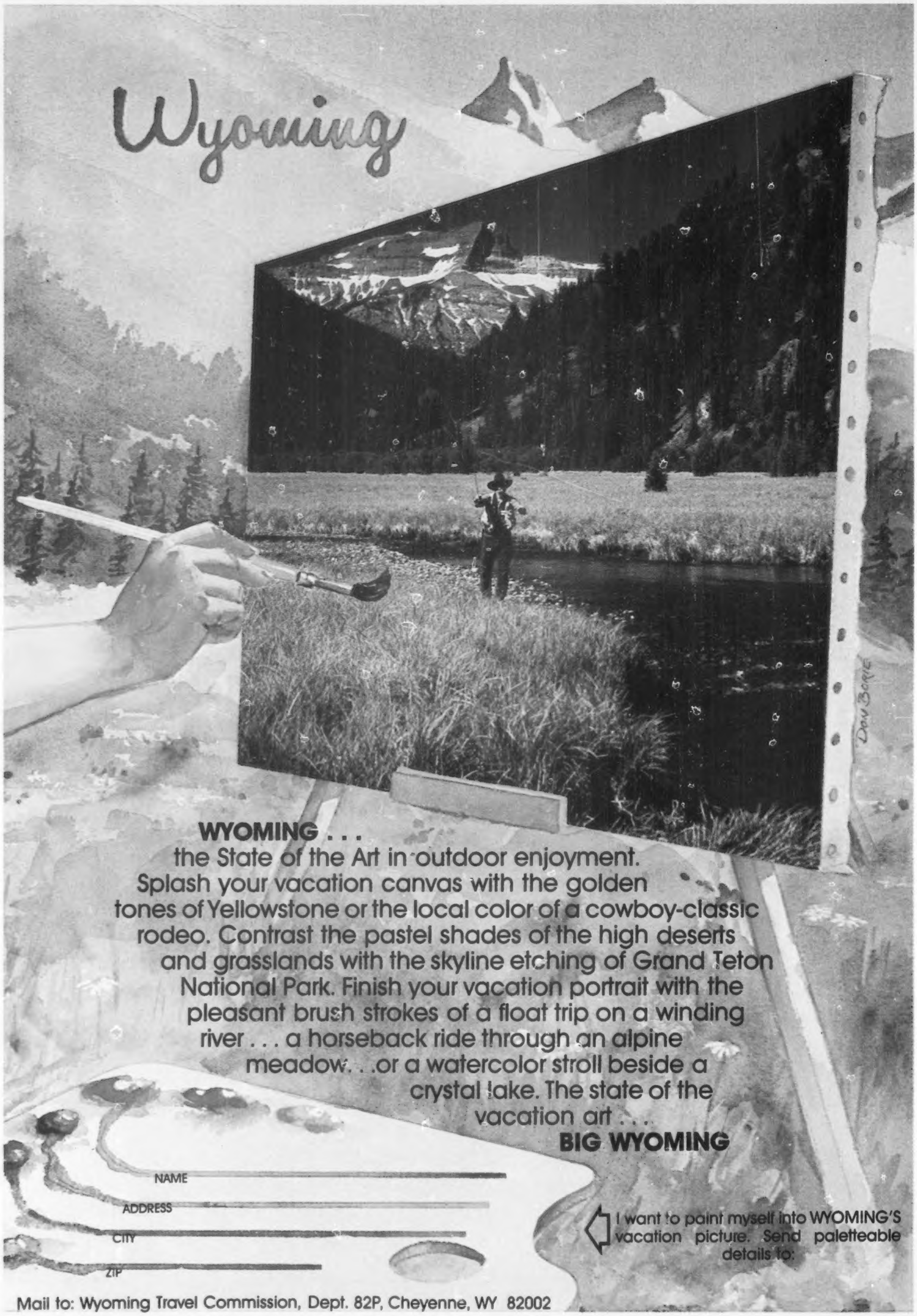

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American West

March/April 1982 Vol. XIX, No. 2

COURTESY THE WHITE HOUSE

Cover
Lighter Relieving a Steamboat Aground
Oil on canvas, 1846 or 1847
by George Caleb Bingham

Gift to the White House of an Anonymous Donor, 1978, and Mr. and Mrs. Walter Shorenstein, 1981

As the residence of American Presidents, the White House displays a number of remarkable works of art depicting various regions of the country. In this issue, we present a selection of works from the walls of the White House that reflect interpretations of the West. On our cover is an outstanding example of genre painting by George Caleb Bingham (1811–1879). Born in frontier Missouri, Bingham was extremely popular for his picturesque scenes of the life of boatmen on the Mississippi and Missouri rivers. This painting, one of Bingham's rare "Jolly Flatboatmen" series, shows a flatboat or "lighter" laden with cargo removed from a steamboat aground in the background. The anonymous donor who gave the first half-interest in the work to the White House is a member of the family of the original 1847 purchaser of the painting. We invite you to turn the pages and enjoy our beautiful Western art from the White House.

20 **Frank S. Matsura**
by JoAnn Roe
Photographer on the Northwest frontier

30 **The Astral Kid and the Spirit Mine**
by Sally Springmeyer Zanjani
Unearthly escapades in the search for gold

34 **Western Art in the White House**
by Clement E. Conger with William G. Allman
A selection of masterpieces from the permanent collection

42 **The Indian Sweat**
by Andrew Weil
photographs by Marianne Greenwood
Traditional purification ritual

50 **Out of a Desert Landscape**
by Barry Lopez
Open spaces and the human spirit

56 **California Houses of Gold**
by John Carden Campbell
Elegant homes tamed the mining frontier

64 **George R. Stewart, Western Writer**
by Wallace Stegner
An appreciation of a remarkable author

4 **Editor's Notes**

6 **Letters to the Editor**

12 **Western Lookout**

14 **Gourmet & Grub**

18 **Hidden Inns & Lost Trails**

70 **Western Books in Brief**

80 **Western Snapshots**

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Editor's Notes

Is there any creature more excited than a boy waiting for a cross-country train?

With a deep, platform-shaking rumble, with a revolving, moon-of-an-eye that quickly appeared between two buildings and bore down on the waiting passengers, the Sunset Limited announced itself in Houston, Texas.

After a family Christmas in Texas my two sons and I were headed back West to our home in Tucson. Boarding the Limited after its awesome introduction, we were soon ensconced in our own sleeping compartment and lulled into dreams by the clicking of the gently rocking car.

We slept soundly through San Antonio, and Del Rio, woke up the next day outside of Sanderson, ate breakfast between there and the sardonically named town of Alpine, and finally quit Texas in midafternoon at El Paso.

In New Mexico, and for the rest of the journey into Arizona, the tracks never ran more than a few miles from the Mexican border. The Sunset Limited follows the southernmost transcontinental route between New Orleans and Los Angeles—2,032 miles, crossing the Mississippi River on the 790-foot Huey P. Long Bridge and the Pecos River on a high suspension bridge. For part of its run it follows the Rio Grande and passes through open desert.

With our three faces to the window we rolled through Deming and Lordsburg and on into the sunset and moonrise. Lots of questions came then in our darkened compartment as the boys watched the moon rise, appear to set again, rise once more, and bounce erratically backwards as the westward-speeding train appeared to reverse the course of the moon against the dark, crenellated ridges of New Mexico.

Some parts of the West are becoming crowded, but between Houston and Tucson there's a great stretch of raw, sometimes rangy, West that's pretty much as it's always been. Even sprawling Houston seems but a speck on the landscape once one has taken in those thousand-miles-and-more of nothing but tiny towns, sparsely spaced ranches, and lots and lots of open land.

Speeding across this landscape I felt myself in a place and time where I knew with certainty that I'd rather be alive right here and now than anywhere else on earth at any time whatever.

On a more practical level, Amtrak threw everything except a train wreck in our path to make the trip impossible. Through an unfathomable computer error, they did, in fact, succeed in making it impossible for the distaff side of our family, who were also supposed to be aboard but who were left standing on the platform in Houston waving goodbye.

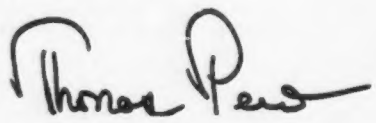
Less than eight hours before departure time an intelligent, hard-working ticket agent in Houston managed to put three of us back on the train by discovering a cancellation and moving our name to the top of the waiting list.

Once on the train we discovered what must have been the Amtrak holiday letdown for hundreds—perhaps thousands—of families who had train reservations. We were told by the conductor that passengers were left standing on the platform in New Orleans, baggage and valid ticket in hand, because seats had been sold more than once.

We can say this for the train (and we've traveled over this Southern Pacific line off and on for the past nine years): the equipment is new, clean, quiet, and comfortable. The roadbed is smooth, and although the food is not the greatest, it's no worse than airplane fare.

There's just no substitute for seeing the country by train, for measuring the breadth of the land with your own eye, out of sight of the plastic and glass that's come to tunnel so many of our highways.

Rolling across the country on the train a sense of time, history, and heartland reveals itself in the constantly changing scene, and who knows, someplace in New Mexico maybe the moon really does run backwards.



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Letters

COURTESY JOHN CARDEN CAMPBELL

Western Snapshot

Dear Editor:

I received the January/February 1982 issue of AMERICAN WEST from my father and read it with great interest, this being the first time I had seen the magazine.

In the interest of accuracy I must point out an obvious error on page 72, the "Western Snapshots" feature. The car pictured is not a "Carter" but rather a Maxwell of about 1905 or 1906 vintage. This vehicle had a two-cylinder opposed engine mounted under the hood.

An automobile known as "Carter Car" was manufactured during this period, but it bore no resemblance to the auto pictured.

David K. Gast
San Diego, Calif.

Otter Creek

Dear Editor:

I see by the January/February edition that Anglo-Saxon arrogance is alive and well in Otter Creek, Montana. Those who are critical of the Indian for not "developing" the land neglected to mention how much land in this country has been exploited and destroyed by the white man. If the white man is so superior, it is difficult to understand why he ever left Europe in the first place. Since it was populated almost entirely by whites, it should have been a veritable paradise.

In his book *Across the Wide Missouri* the historian Bernard De Voto says on "civilizing" the Indian: "It could succeed only by means of the greatest cruelty men can inflict on other men, only by breaking down the culture that made them men." So I guess one of the prices we have to pay for what our ancestors did is to suffer "obnoxious" Indians drinking in Ashland bars.

Gem Johnson
Westminster, Calif.

Dear Editor:

I am a Crow Indian, and I'd like to respond to the comments made by ranchers in your article "The Song of Otter Creek."

The comments the old coots make about hating Indians as much as they do niggers is the general feeling among ranchers around Indian country. Why? Because he has cheated the Indian more than any other person who has cheated him, even more than the government. The ranchers keep telling themselves the same things over and over again until they believe it. It was people who felt like this that created problems for the Indians. Their grandfathers' attitude was "get that farmland for me, I don't give a damn what happens to the Indians" and the government helped them do it. Now it is theirs, the Indian has nothing and he (the rancher) should be satisfied. Why does he keep on hating?

Each Crow Indian is worth six million—*maybe*! But do you think any individual on the Crow reservation has *seen* any of it? Everybody near the reservation is getting rich off of the coal, especially the whites, except the people who own the coal, the Crows. No one ever makes comments about Crows and Cheyennes who are trying to make a living and be "good American citizens," against tough odds, and all the good things we're doing. No, they'd rather make comments about that minority of our people who hang around bars and get into trouble. It makes them feel good and they'll do it until they go to that great roundup in the sky. But it'll continue because they've taught their children and grandchildren to hate Indians the same way they did. How sad.

I am a graduate of Rocky Mountain

(Continued on page 8)

AMERICAN WEST
is published by the
BUFFALO BILL
HISTORICAL CENTER
Cody, Wyoming

THE BUFFALO BILL HISTORICAL CENTER is a nonprofit institution dedicated to preserving and exhibiting the heritage of the American West. It is also home of four major museums whose exhibits of art, ethnographic materials, and historic artifacts reflect more than one hundred years of America's colorful past. Together the museums at the Center offer an extensive view of frontier life.

The Buffalo Bill Museum, dedicated in 1927, holds the largest collection of Buffalo Bill material in the world. The Whitney Gallery of Western Art, begun in 1959, features masterworks of American painting and sculpture. The Plains Indian Museum, opened in 1969, brings to life the rich traditions of Native Americans in the West. And the Winchester Museum records the history of American firearms through the magnificent gun collection Oliver Winchester began in 1860.

Membership in the Center's Patrons' Association is open to anyone interested in America's Western heritage. Annual membership includes subscriptions to AMERICAN WEST and a quarterly newsletter, free museum admission, and discounts on museum publications. Categories are: Individual—$35, Family—$60, Centennial & Small Business—$100, Sponsor—$250, Sustaining—$500, Benefactor & Corporate—$1,000, Pahaska League—$2,000. Tax-deductible donations may be sent to Box 1000, Cody, Wyoming 82414.

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Letters *(Continued from page 6)*

College, Billings, Montana, with a degree in History and I work for the National Park Service as a Park Technician. I pay taxes and so do many of my friends and relatives who work for a living.

Mardell Hogan
Crow Agency, Mont.

Navajo Code Talkers

Dear Editor:

In World War II, two of my brothers were Marines, both on Iwo Jima, Guadalcanal, etc. One brother is dead, the other lives nearby, and I would love to give him the November/December issue of AMERICAN WEST, especially because of the Code Talkers story. Please send me another November/December copy.

Golda M. Mitchell
Wichita, Kan.

Dear Editor:

Please send me three copies of the November/December issue, with the Navajo Code Talkers article. Those of us who have friends on the reservation have long been aware of the great job these men did. We are also very proud of the all-Navajo Marine company just graduated at Pendleton. They join our own sons who served there and are instilling the loyalty in our grandsons. The Navajos (Dineh) are a great people. Please keep writing about them.

Lucy O. McConnehey
Tujunga, Calif.

Stagecoaches

Dear Editor:

Your "Splendid Misery" article by Elliott West (November/December 1981) has a special interest for me as Alberta, too, had its stagecoaches, specifically (but not exclusively) between Forts Edmonton and Calgary in the 1880s.

In your note about the illustration on page 62, you might have mentioned that the wheel horses' harness includes breeching (usually pronounced britching, at least in Canada) around their

(Continued on page 11)

This powerful bronze sculpture measures 7 x 6¾ inches and is mounted on a solid walnut base. Each bronze is individually numbered and signed by the artist. The edition is limited to 100 pieces, priced at $625. To acquire this exciting work, mail the order form below to Bill R. Shaffer. Please include your check for $625, or use VISA or MASTERCARD. Allow 90 days for delivery. We guarantee your satisfaction, or you may return the sculpture within 30 days for full refund.

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Today, original John Clymer paintings bring offers of as much as $250,000, while even his more obscure *Post* illustrations auction at about $10,000 each.

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hindquarters, so that by pulling backwards on the vehicle's pole or tongue, at the front, they could back it up. The lead horses, of course, not so fastened, were not thus equipped. All the other illustrations also show this difference in harness.

John W. Chalmers
Edmonton, Alta.

Recollections

Dear Editor:

I wish to thank you for your beautiful magazine and to tell you that the Indians attract my attention. I am part Cherokee on the paternal side of my family. My father homesteaded near Fairbanks, Arkansas, where I was born. I can recall my great-grandmother who was a full-blooded Cherokee.

My mother, who was Scotch and Irish, used to tell me about her home-life during the Civil War days, about the carpetbaggers and Jeff Davis. I had one uncle who rode from the Middle West to California on horseback.

I spent my honeymoon in a place just south of Thumb, Wyoming. My husband and I loved that beautiful country. I came to California in 1930, and when I saw roses blooming in December I did not wish to leave.

Dolores K. Avery
Santa Clara, Calif.

Dear Editor:

Having been born in Wyoming and spent my life in the West, your magazine interests me. My father drove cattle over the long trail from Chihuahua, Mexico, Pecos valley, and the Texas panhandle to Fort Keogh, Montana, in 1884. One herd belonged to "One Eyed" Land. They were six months on the trail; they crossed the little and big Powder rivers and the Yellowstone. Indians were no problem, but rustlers were. Sixty-two were lynched along the Missouri River–Judith River basin country.

Your writers might be interested in the story of the lynching of the notorious rustler Ella Watson, "Cattle Kate," and her boy friend Averill. The event took place September 19, 1889, in a small canyon on the Sweetwater River. A rustler by the name of Henderson was done away with about the same time. They may be in the Rawlins, Wyoming, cemetery.

Fred A. Carleson
Salt Lake City, Utah

Ski Aspen

Dear Editor:

I. William Berry, in his fragmented attempt at outlining a history of alpine skiing in the West, seems to have accepted the slick over-generalized media hype created about Aspen by the image makers. He states that "for some reason hard to fathom, myth persists that Aspen became the next (1940) of the great pre-war western resorts." He supported his self-created myth by citing the opening year of the Aspen Skiing Corporation (1947), which provided capital to improve a facility that, unknown to Mr. Berry, had been operating commercially for nearly a full decade and had already established a national reputation.

(Continued on page 78)

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"Keresan Dancers" etching Ed. 50 14" x 11"

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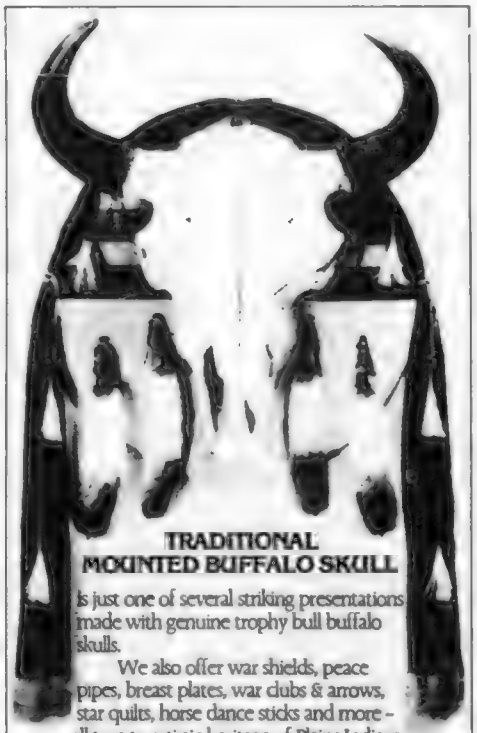

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KWAKIUTL INDIAN MASK, PRE-1893. COURTESY FIELD MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

New magic at Field Museum

On April 24 following seven years of preparation, the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago will open a dramatic new exhibit hall for its world-famous permanent collection of Northwest Coast Indian and Eskimo artifacts. A 15,000 square-foot area on the museum's main floor has been designed to display 2,500 artifacts ranging from striking ceremonial masks to towering totem poles. Entitled "Maritime Peoples of the Arctic and Northwest Coast," the exhibit contains treasures displayed at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. Marshall Field I founded the museum as a home for this collection.

The world of the exhibit is a narrow stretch of forests and tundra extending for thousands of miles along the northwest and arctic coast of North America. Five galleries within the new hall enable visitors to compare the cultures of Northwest Coast Indians and Eskimos living in this region. Among the highlights of the exhibit is a life-size model of a Kwakiutl Indian house like those found in southern British Columbia. To celebrate the opening, Field Museum will erect a fifty-five-foot totem pole carved by Tsimshian Indian artist Norman Tait outdoors near Lake Shore Drive.

Pageant Honors Coronado. In 1540 the uncharted lands of southeastern Arizona were crossed by Spanish explorer Francisco Vázquez de Coronado and his party on their way north in search of gold. To celebrate this exploration and the Hispanic contributions of those who came after Coronado, the National Park Service will hold an all-day pageant on April 18 at the Coronado National Memorial near the United States–Mexico border. Now in its tenth year, the Coronado International Historical Pageant includes mariachi music, craft demonstrations, and a variety of Indian dances. Several thousand people are expected for the festivities which will also celebrate the thirtieth year of the Coronado National Memorial.

Leonardo da Vinci Goes West. The masterpieces of Leonardo da Vinci rarely travel in the United States; so naturally, excitement greets the current exhibit of fifty drawings by the Florentine genius at The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. "Leonardo da Vinci: Nature Studies from the Royal Library at Windsor Castle"—on view in Houston through April 4—includes landscapes, botanical drawings, and studies of the flow of water, and represents the first major show of Leonardo's work ever held in Texas.

Shown with permission of Queen Elizabeth II and sponsored by a grant from Getty Oil Company, the exhibit consists of selections from 600 works by Leonardo in the Windsor collection. The exhibition was previously held at the J. Paul Getty Museum in California and the Metropolitan Museum in New York. Royal Librarian at Windsor Castle, Sir Robin Mackworth-Young, explains in the show's catalogue that Leonardo used his extraordinary talent for drawing to record "his thoughts, experiences and discoveries much as a diarist or a scholar uses words, thus preserving for a later age intimate access to the very workings of his mind."

Apple Blossom Festival. Every spring along the Wenatchee Valley in Washington, thousands of apple trees burst into bloom. Blossom Days, featuring dances around a maypole, began in Wenatchee in 1919 as a simple celebration of spring and the growing orchard industry. Sixty-three years later Wenatchee continues the tradition of celebrating the region's apple crop with a colorful variety of activities. This spring the Washington State Apple Blossom Festival begins April 22 and extends through May 2. Highlights of the celebration include a ten-kilometer run through blossoming orchards, an elaborate air show, antique and craft displays, and a two-hour grand parade involving 150 entries. Sponsored by the Wenatchee Area Chamber of Commerce, this gala springtime affair has developed close ties through the years with the Aomori Apple Blossom Festival in Japan.

Elementary School Treasure. For sixty-one years a valuable oil painting by the distinguished Taos artist Bert G. Phillips (1868–1956) hung relatively unnoticed on the walls of Columbian Elementary School in Raton, New Mexico. School officials became aware of the treasure in their midst last fall when Russell Knudson, Superintendent of Raton Public Schools, learned of the high prices now being paid for Phillips's original works. The painting—an Indian scene entitled *The*

THE LAST TRAIL BY BERT G. PHILLIPS PHOTO COURTESY RATON DAILY RANGE

Last Trail—was recently appraised at about $95,000 by Forrest Fenn, a well-known art expert in Santa Fe. This work is being kept in a bank vault while the community decides whether to keep the painting or sell it to raise money for educational purposes.

The Last Trail was purchased from Phillips about 1920 by Mrs. F. H. Oliver, principal of Columbian Elementary School at that time. Mrs. Oliver, who donated the painting to the school, received a personal letter from Phillips expressing his feelings about the work. The artist wrote, "I am delighted to learn of the pleasure and pride taken in the picture, especially on the part of the children. I never find more appreciation and real sympathy for my art than among you good people in Raton...." *The Last Trail* depicts an Indian chief who ponders the possible destruction of his people's last hunting trail by white settlers. Phillips helped found the Taos Society of Artists in 1912.

Portraits in the Parlor. Intriguing portraits of Californians—traders and artists, politicians and financiers—can be enjoyed through April at the California Historical Society's Whittier Mansion in San Francisco. During the nineteenth century, portraits were often displayed in the family parlor amid ornaments ranging from daguerreotypes on the mantelpiece to seashells and statuary on etageres. Visitors to the portrait exhibit will see a recreated Victorian parlor decorated with materials from the society's collections to evoke the atmosphere in which the paintings originally hung.

More Seri Baskets. The giant ceremonial *sappiim* basket pictured in "The Power of Seri Baskets" (AMERICAN WEST, January/February 1982) as well as other fine examples of Seri crafts are on exhibit through April 15 at the Casa Grande Valley Historical Society in Casa Grande, Arizona. A slide presentation about the Seri people and their arts is being shown in conjuncton with the exhibit.

Night of the First Americans. March 4 the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C., will present "Night of the First Americans," a colorful salute to the accomplishments of the American Indian people. Produced by Hollywood star Lorne Greene, the show involves a large cast of well-known actors and includes a ballet choreographed especially for the evening by the Osage Indian ballerina Maria Tallchief. Numerous works of American Indian art have been gathered at the Center for exhibition and sale in conjunction with the performance. "Night of the First Americans" is sponsored by the Council of Energy Resource Tribes.

Water Worries. According to a poll conducted by the Behavior Research Center of Arizona, most Westerners believe there will be serious water shortages within ten years. A Rocky Mountain poll showed that concern over shortages was particularly acute in Colorado where 70 percent of those surveyed believe their state already faces, or will face, water shortage problems. This poll was based on 1,150 telephone interviews with adult heads of households.

Buffalo Ranching. Thirty-year-old Oliver Scott of West Bloomfield, New York—an area of rolling wheat and cornfields—is one of two or three full-time buffalo ranchers in the nation, claims the Custer, South Dakota-based National Buffalo Association. Starting with a herd of three animals in 1973, he now owns 165 American bison and sees a growing market because of the tasty and tender quality of the meat. Once almost extinct, there are now as many as fifty-thousand buffalo in the United States, an increase that the association partially attributes to the success of buffalo ranching.

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ILLUSTRATION BY MARTHA PAISLEY RUTH

The lyrical gastropod Abalone

by Brian McGinty

If your only acquaintance with abalone has been in an elegant, big-city restaurant or in one of the ubiquitous fish grottos that seem to grace every pier along the long coast of California, you probably regard the elusive marine gastropod as a gourmet item—and not without reason. Abalone has become increasingly scarce in recent years, more expensive for restaurateurs to serve on a regular basis, and, inevitably, more and more sought after by determined epicures.

If you are an old-timer on the California coast, however—if you remember the days when troops of sun-bronzed Chinese and Japanese fishermen put in at San Francisco and Monterey and San Diego with boatloads of barnacle-encrusted shells to be scalded in caldrons of brine, then dried and salted—you may look upon the food as grub more than anything else. For years abalone was a staple food of Oriental fishermen on the Pacific Coast. And long before these transplanted Orientals began prying the humpbacked univalves from their underwater roosts and hauling them ashore in hempen sacks, the West's original inhabitants savored abalone. Archaeological digs on Catalina Island reveal that this marine food was important in the diet of coastal Indians as long ago as 4,000 B.C.

Spaniards and Mexicans never developed a taste for American abalone. Confusing it, perhaps, with the smaller and more plentiful Pacific Coast mussels (which are seasonally toxic), they spurned the giant shellfish as poisonous and looked with amazement on the Orientals' centuries-old appetite for abalone. When the American journalist Charles Nordhoff tasted abalone sometime in the 1870s, he was no more enthusiastic about it than his Latin friends. Nordhoff thought the meat was "tougher than an old boot." Noting that abalone was considered a delicacy among the Chinese, Nordhoff said: "I do not know how to cook it—probably it is used to make one of the 3,500,099 soups from which a red-buttoned Mandarin takes his choice when he orders dinner."

Although abalone is found in many widely separated areas of the world, the varieties off North America's west coast are larger and more readily marketable than those found elsewhere. The Chinese and, later, the Japanese made the abalone into an immensely successful commercial enterprise, dominating the abalone fisheries of the Pacific Coast up until the late 1920s.

By that time, many Americans had developed an appetite for this unusual food. Credit for such a remarkable turn of taste is generally given to "Pop" Ernest Doelter, the genial Monterey restaurateur who developed a new method of preparing the fleshy mollusk and, with the help of a troop of artists and writers, introduced it to a whole new world of diners.

Born in Kehl, Germany, in 1865, Doelter came to the United States while still a young man and found work in a succession of hotels and restaurants from New York to San Francisco. He arrived in Monterey in 1907 and opened a small cafe on Alvarado Street. In 1919 he moved to a larger fish house at the foot of Fisherman's Wharf. Experimenting with abalone, Doelter discovered an ingenious way of overcoming the rubberlike toughness that so dismayed Charles Nordhoff and other detractors of the muscular gastropod. He cut the flesh into thin slices, pummeled them with a wooden mallet, then fried the "steaks" in butter. The result was crisp, flaky meat, tender enough to be cut with the edge of a fork.

Writers and artists from nearby Carmel flocked to Doelter's. After convivial feasts of abalone steaks and great jugs of California wine, the Carmelites penned praises to the abalone—verses to which they gave the collective title "The Abalone Song."

Oh! some drink rain and some
champagne,
Or brandy by the pony;
But I will try a little rye
With a dash of abalone.

Oh! some like jam, and some like ham,
And some like macaroni;
But bring me in a pail of gin
And a tub of abalone.

Poet George Sterling was the leader of the Carmel crowd (a group that included Mary Austin, James Hopper, Sinclair Lewis, and off and on again, Jack London) and the principal author of "The Abalone Song"—though he had help from Hopper, playwright and novelist Harry Leon Wilson, Carmel mayor Perry Newberry, and others.

He wanders free beside the sea,
Where'er the coast is stony;
He flaps his wings and madly sings—
The plaintive abalone.

"Pop" Ernest Doelter died in 1935, but his recipe for abalone lives on, revived every ten years or so by a new generation of enthusiastic abalone lovers.

Doelter's Abalone Steaks

At a fish market, buy 1 lb. sliced, tenderized abalone steaks. With a heavy wooden mallet or rolling pin, pound slices on a hard surface—briskly enough to break the tissue but not to reduce it to mush. Dip the slices in 1 beaten egg thinned with 3 T. of dry sherry; then fry in ½ cube of butter in a heavy skillet, 1 min. to a side. Season with 1 t. freshly ground pepper. Serves 2 to 4 people.

While savoring "Pop" Ernest's specialty, you may want to remember the Carmel crowd and recite a stanza of their poem in praise of the lyrical gastropod:

Oh! some think that the Lord is fat,
And some that He is bony;
But as for me I think that He
Is like an Abalone.

Brian McGinty *is an attorney and writer who has published numerous articles in popular magazines and scholarly journals.*

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Charlie Russell painting courtesy of Montana Historical Society, Helena.

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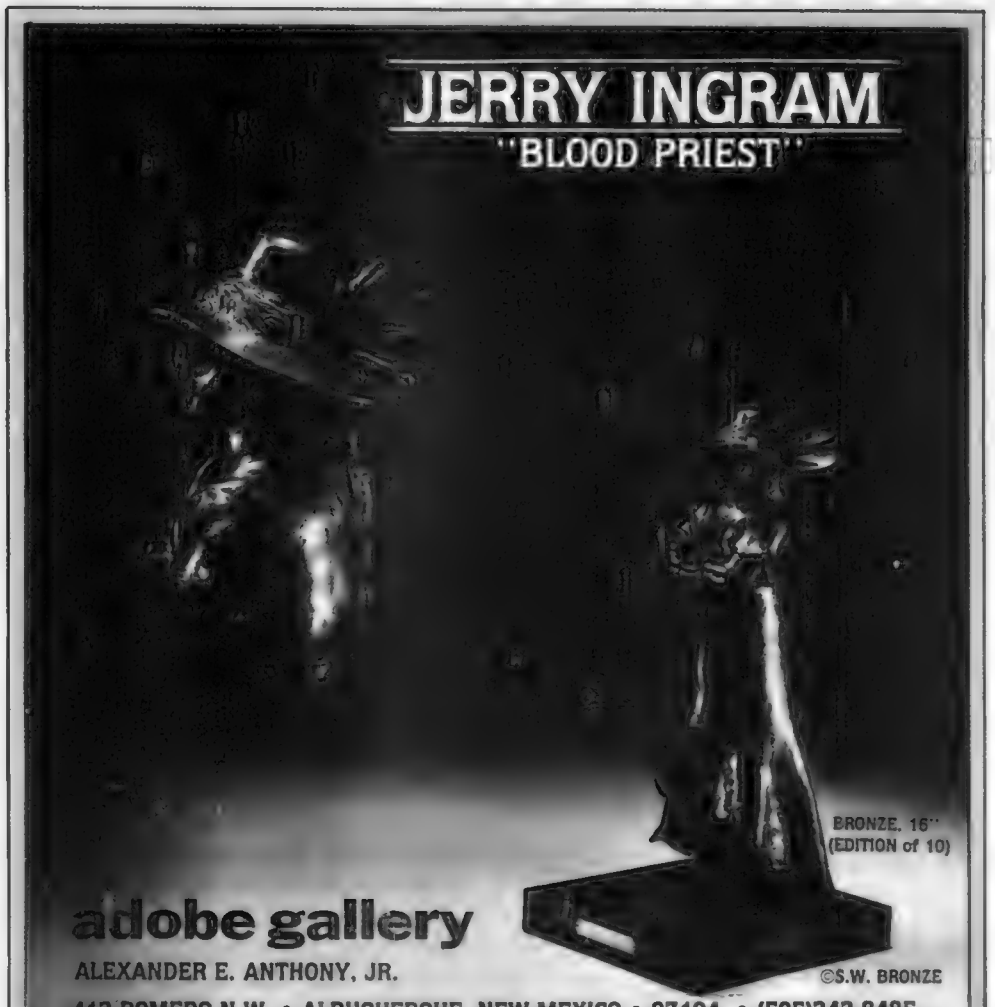

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ILLUSTRATION BY D. K. NIWA

Trail of splendor

Montana's Beartooths

by Harrison Fagg

The Beartooth Range in southern Montana near Yellowstone Park appears first as an undulating line of white and gray against the sky. We draw nearer, leaving the highway to experience this ancient wilderness on foot, to explore trails blazed by Indians hundreds of years ago. This is a summer adventure, and we are well prepared out of respect for the perils of nature in this land. We carry our own world on our back—bed, house, stove, food—equipment for several nights on the trail.

Hiking the Beartooths will delight historian, naturalist, and geologist. In the late eighteenth century, the main hunting ground of the Crow tribe was in this area. Buffalo jumps and campsites with arrowheads can sometimes be seen. During the Nez Percé War of 1877, Chief Joseph led his band across this range as he fled eastward in a gallant attempt to escape the United States cavalry, which was intent upon restricting the Nez Percé to a reservation.

Here in the Beartooths the student of nature can observe numerous ecosystems rich in plant and animal life. As for the geologist—here is a glimpse into the creation of the world. Hundreds of millions of years ago, the Beartooths heaved up from a swamp to their magnificent height. The rocks that pushed to the top are still evident. American astronauts examined them before flights to the moon in order to compare formations there with the Beartooths' unique geologic features.

We choose one of the most beautiful entrances to the Beartooths, a trail starting at the Chief Joseph campgrounds near Cooke City, Montana. Extending about fifty miles to East Rosebud Lake, the path winds from about seven thousand feet to far above the timberline, then back again to civilization.

The start of the hike is not dramatic, but after three miles of dense timber the scenery changes. When we reach Bald Knob, a spectacular view opens up. Here, nearly at the timberline, sheer walls of granite descend into clear waters. Each bend in the trail ahead promises and produces beauty; each turn, the anticipation of confronting deer, elk, bear, moose, or even a chipmunk.

At a higher altitude the view changes once more. No longer do we see clusters of White Aspen and Douglas Fir, but rather scrub timber and dwarf pines twisted by the wind. The only noise is the slight rustle of the wind, the scrape of boots against the rocks, and, occasionally, the staccato cry of a bird.

Soon we begin walking up the first glacier, which slopes abruptly into a valley, forming, as it melts, cups that look like the surface of a giant waffle. Here, above ten thousand feet, we realize that stamina is necessary in all forms of life.

The trail leads us on to Fossil Lake, a vast reservoir held at what seems to be the top of the world. Glaciers flow from the mountain tops into the lake, a blend of the frozen and unfrozen meeting in a silver ribbon. Time stops as we gather strength from the scene. We forget the world of rules and the customs of society, feeling engulfed in a space of unlimited dimension.

We walk on, around the jagged shore of the lake. Ahead lies the majesty of Dewey Mountain and the crest of our trail. Now a new experience begins. Having reached the top, we start our descent. A view of the East Rosebud Valley appears as the trail leads down through the flower-covered grounds, past cascading streams, and back into the dwarf timber and shrubs.

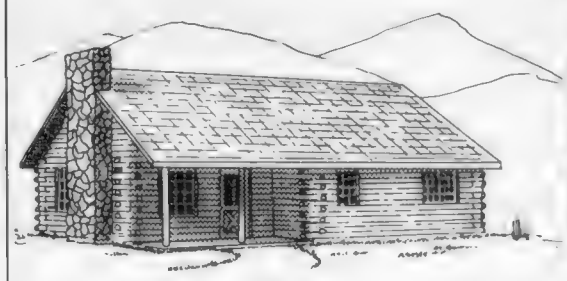
Farther along we see another of God's gifts to man—Impass Falls. They are spectacular. Water tumbles noisily over the cliff, hitting the cold, clear pool at the bottom which forms Dugan Lake. On the shore we gaze up at the falls, feeling that if the Beartooths have a single focal point—a heart—we have certainly found it.

Past the Lake of Falls and Rainbow Lake, the trail brings us to another wonder—Box Canyon with vertical, granite walls two thousand feet high. The river, the wind, and the birds fill the air inside the gorge with a symphony of sounds. From cracks and crevices, greenery grows miraculously in a few inches of granite dust.

Now it's back into the timber again—past Elk Lake and on to East Rosebud Lake and the end of the trail. Suddenly, the passage is over—the Beartooths have been crossed, and we are back in civilization. Louis Schellbach said, "Our lives are so short, but if we appreciate and understand natural things, we will be living more lives than one." Amidst the splendor of the Beartooths—Montana's crown—this door opens to us.

For those who would rather view the outdoors from their car, the Beartooth Highway offers spectacular views. Fishing is available from campsites within a stone's throw of the highway, and trails flat in grade and short in distance allow the passing visitor to witness this splendor firsthand.

Harrison Fagg *is an architect and downtown planner in Billings, Montana, and Majority Leader in the Montana House of Representatives.*



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Frank S. Matsura

Photographer on the Northwest frontier

by JoAnn Roe

He stood there, blinking a little in the hot summer sun, his eyes adjusting from the gloom of the stuffy stagecoach he had just left. Looking around, he soberly regarded the rough buildings and partial boardwalks of the little gold-mining town, Conconully, Washington—far from any city and so different from Tokyo, Japan, his native home. Frank S. Matsura picked up his bag, bulky camera, and tripod and set off for the unadorned square building called the Hotel Elliott.

Passersby glanced curiously at him as he went—a slight figure just over five feet tall, dressed immaculately in suit, tie, and jaunty straw hat, a sharp contrast to local ranchers and miners in flannel shirts and overalls. Setting his baggage down, not in the hotel lobby, but at the back door of the place, he announced, "I'm Frank Matsura. Please tell Mr. Dillabough I'm here to start work." He was the cook's new helper.

This is how Okanogan pioneers collectively remember Matsura's arrival in Conconully in 1903. Noticed immediately as the only Japanese person in the little community, he soon won respect for his unusual talents—not as a cook's helper (a job necessary for survival), but as a photographer. From 1903 until his sudden death in 1913, Frank S. Matsura documented the life of the hardworking people of Okanogan County, an area of over 5,000 square miles peopled by about the same number of residents.

In the early twentieth century, this county of northern Washington was a backwater of the old West, a ranching and mining region only beginning to see homesteaders vie with Indians for land. Little touched by urban influence, being about 300 miles from Seattle and at least that far from Vancouver, British Columbia, the Okanogan country attracted only the hardy. Having made the difficult journey there—usually by horseback or stage and riverboat—homesteaders

This shacklike, wooden building sheltered by a broad awning was Frank Matsura's photography studio in Okanogan, Washington, from 1907 to 1913, the year of his death. Equipped with racks of postcards and backdrops for portraits, the studio became a popular place in this isolated frontier town. Ranchers, farmers, Indians, and local businessmen were all studio customers.

COURTESY OKANOGAN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The newcomer in town was a slight figure just over five feet tall and immaculately dressed.

Special entertainments like the local talent show (above) *helped pass the winter season in Okanogan County. The gregarious Japanese photographer carried his camera equipment everywhere, documenting the life of the hardworking people who became his friends.* (Opposite) *This striking photograph reveals Matsura's small build and careful grooming as he stands beside the huge frame of W. R. Kahlow, owner of a livery stable in Okanogan.*

and miners found an idyllic area of rolling grasslands and brawling rivers, of lakes filled with fish, forests alive with game, and towering mountains rich with valuable minerals.

Orientals were emigrating to the Northwest at the time of Matsura's arrival, but most of them were Chinese laborers. The few Japanese who filtered into the Seattle area usually stayed near the cities. It was unusual for a Japanese man to venture alone into a backwoods town like Conconully, and Matsura's presence was even more surprising because he proved to be a man of culture and education. He remains a man of mystery; his roots in Japan have eluded researchers to a large extent, and his full story can only be surmised.

In 1901 a man by the name of Sakae Matsurra applied in Tokyo for a passport to "study commerce" in Seattle. He listed himself as twenty-seven years of age and the head of a family. Pieces of mail addressed in Japanese characters to Sakae and to Mr. S. Matsura were discovered among the photographer's effects, suggesting that Frank S. Matsura and Sakae Matsurra were the same man. The Tokyo address given

COURTESY OKANOGAN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

JoAnn Roe's book Frank Matsura: Frontier Photographer *has been received with interest in Japan. As the result of a recent Japanese television program about Matsura, one of his distant relatives volunteered some additional information about the photographer. In 1901 Matsura was on the faculty of a Christian school for girls, Shoei Jo-shi Gakuen, in Tokyo. During that same year, he left abruptly for the United States without informing his relatives of his plans. Also, it has been established that Matsura's grandfather was connected with the security for Townsend Harris, the first American consul in Japan, who helped open Japan to foreign trade after the treaty arranged by Commodore Matthew Perry in 1854.*

on the passport is long obsolete, but it raises several possibilities. A wealthy and influential Matsura family of the Kyushu prefecture had a city home in that neighborhood. Also from Kyushu was a Mr. Toda, an English teacher, whose death and past life were outlined in a clipping found among Frank Matsura's possessions. Unfortunately, there is no proof that Conconully's photographer was related to the Kyushu Matsura family.

Clearly, Frank Matsura was well educated and skilled in English. In 1904 the *Okanogan Record* in Conconully published an article about the education of Japanese women under the byline "Frank S. Matssura." Old-timers remember that Matsura spoke excellent English with very little accent, and they recall with amusement how, on occasions, a stranger to Okanogan would address him in pidgin English. Maintaining a poker face, Matsura would respond with a torrent of equally fractured English. Only when the stranger stayed on would he learn, to his embarrassment, that Frank Matsura spoke English correctly.

AFTER PERFORMING HIS CHORES at the hotel with alacrity and cheerfulness, Matsura lugged his camera equipment to scenic spots, mines, social events, and school gatherings. The pictures he took were developed in the hotel's laundry-room sinks at night. Although Matsura maintained a close relationship with the editor of the Conconully paper (O. H. Woody and then Frank Putnam), his photographs did not find a ready market there. Newspaper reproduction of photographs was an expensive technique, and Conconully was far from shops furnishing this type of engraving. However, Matsura's photographic forays were documented in the social notes of the paper with increasing respect.

Evidence suggests that Frank Matsura might have been in the Japanese Army before 1900. When the Russo-Japanese War heated up in 1904, Matsura dutifully packed up and went to Seattle, purportedly to rejoin the army. He returned to Conconully two weeks later, however, explaining that he was an American and did not need to go. The Japanese Army did summon some of its immigrant citizens from Seattle, but only

COURTESY OKANOGAN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Photographing a wide variety of subjects, Matsura quickly won respect for his unusual talents.

(Above) *Matsura poses playfully for a stamp photo camera, a device of the day that used numerous small lenses. Income from selling stamp photos helped the Japanese photographer support himself without taking on another kitchen job.*
(Opposite) *An elderly Indian couple known as Captain Jim and Mary sit in the doorway of their home. Captain Jim liked to tell stories of his days as a scout for the United States government. When he died at over one-hundred years of age, townsfolk gave him a funeral with proper military honors.*

a few—mostly former officers. Matsura probably checked his status and found he was not required. Often during his life, Matsura expressed the wish that American law would permit him to become a citizen.

In 1907 he moved to the newly incorporated town of Okanogan to open a studio—actually a rough board shack with a crooked awning that shielded its one window from the merciless Okanogan sun. Although he had sold photographs to Conconully residents, it was not until this move that Matsura became a career photographer. Here his photos were published regularly in the *Okanogan Independent*. Okanogan businessmen created a commercial club to promote the area and bought prints from Matsura for national advertising. Even the Great Northern Railway, laying rails northward from Wenatchee in 1911, sent an agent to obtain Matsura photos for use in traveling displays that promoted homesteading in the Okanogan area and emphasized the fledgling orchard industry.

Matsura's efforts were underwritten to a degree by small

COURTESY OKANOGAN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

sums of money received periodically from an unidentified source. Some said the donor was an aunt in Tokyo, others a cousin in New York. No one really knows. Although Matsura looked for work as a cook in Okanogan at one point, he was able to continue his photography without taking on another job.

In Conconully, Matsura had conceived the idea of marketing his photographs as picture postcards, then a relatively new technique. Sent by purchasers to friends all over the world, Matsura's postcards helped to publicize Okanogan County. In 1908 Matsura bought a stamp photo camera, a portrait camera, and backdrops necessary to produce studio portraits. A fad of the time, stamp photos were small pictures collected much as today's hobbyists gather playing cards, comic books, or old match covers. The camera used a battery of small lenses, partitioned into an equal number of frames. The photographer had the option of using one lens at a time or all at a time. The resulting print has numerous small views on it, similar to the proof sheets used by modern photographers. Inexpensive and very popular, the stamp photos became a steady source of income for Matsura. He and his friends had fun in the studio posing in ridiculous costumes and making funny faces.

INDIANS FROM THE COLVILLE RESERVATION bordering Okanogan were regular visitors to that town and mingled with townsfolk at parades, horse races, and other social events. It was a time of transition for the Indians. Bands called Moses, Colville, Okanogan, San Poil, and Kartar all lived on assigned lands sprawling from east of the Okanogan River to a point near today's Grand Coulee Dam.

While Matsura was living in Okanogan, government surveyor Bill Muldrow became his friend. When Muldrow roamed through the Colville lands on surveys, Matsura frequently accompanied him and took pictures of Indian life, welding a friendly bond with the Indians in the process. These Indians became Matsura's studio customers, sometimes appearing in ranchers' garb and at other times in their

COURTESY OKANOGAN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

COURTESY OKANOGAN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The citizens of Okanogan were shocked and saddened by Matsura's sudden death.

Matsura's photographs helped to advertise the agricultural potential of Okanogan County. (Above) *Farmer Will Daniel of Spring Coulee displays wheat over six feet tall. Orchards, ranches, mines, and farms were all subjects of interest to the energetic photographer, who continued his forays into the countryside despite failing health.* (Above, right) *An impish smile lights up the face of a Chinook Indian girl. Matsura enjoyed friendly relationships with many Indians on the Colville Indian Reservation.*

finest traditional dress. In this way, Matsura created a rich storehouse of important visual history for later generations.

The life of this remarkable man ended in tragedy before he was forty. As early as 1911 or 1912, he told acquaintances that he had tuberculosis and would not live long. At one time he remarked to O. H. Woody, "I'm glad I'm a Christian. I am not afraid to die." However, few took him seriously, as he was known for his joking manner and always appeared energetic.

Unfortunately, Matsura was gravely ill. In October, 1912, he announced in the *Okanogan Independent* that he was closing his gallery indefinitely because of his health. He rallied, however, reopening his business in time for the Christmas season. Again in February, 1913, Matsura admitted he was in pain. This time he advertised his postcards and store racks for sale and essentially dismantled his studio. But he continued to do free-lance photography, roaming the county to take photographs of orchards, the government's irrigation project, stagecoaches, the new auto stages connecting frontier towns,

COURTESY OKANOGAN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

and the daily life of homesteaders and Indians.

On the evening of June 16, 1913, Matsura was walking down the streets of Okanogan when the town marshal stopped him to ask for help. A prowler had entered a local store, and the marshal asked Matsura to notify Mr. Neumann, the owner. Always a fast-moving person, Matsura ran down the street. As he approached Neumann's home he was stricken with a fit of coughing and veered off toward the house of his friend Bill Muldrow across the street. He rushed up on the porch, pounded the door, then fell on the front lawn hemorrhaging from his lungs. By the time help reached him, Matsura was dead.

Shocked and sorrowful citizens bore their friend, one of the most popular men in Okanogan, to the local undertaker to await instructions from the Japanese consul in Tacoma. When the terse comment came that they were to bury Matsura where he was, residents gave him the largest funeral ever seen in Okanogan to that time. An overflow crowd of 300 people came to his service at the Okanogan Auditorium. He

Here Matsura's camera captures the arrival of the riverboat Columbia *at a crowded pier in Okanogan. Men in shirtsleeves cluster at the far end of the dock which also holds stacks of empty grain sacks for the coming harvest. In the early part of the twentieth century this area of northern Washington was a remote frontier. Steamers like the* Columbia *represented a major means of transportation for the homesteaders, miners, and other pioneers settling in the region.*

COURTESY OKANOGAN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Matsura was buried on a site overlooking the Okanogan valley—far from his native Japan.

The ferry-crossing on the Okanogan River is the center of this pleasing scene, photographed by Matsura in 1907. A branch of the Columbia River, the Okanogan formed part of the boundary of the Colville Indian Reservation.

was buried in the Masonic Cemetery on a benchland overlooking the Okanogan valley—his adopted home so different from the lush, green lands of Japan.

Matsura's photo collection went unnoticed for sixty-two years. After his death, the dry plates and negatives were given to his good friend Judge William Compton Brown, who later donated his own papers on Indian affairs and legal proceedings to Washington State University. Some of Matsura's negatives went to WSU, as well, quite possibly by accident. The bulk of the collection, mostly on glass plates, was stored in the garage of Brown's legatee before being donated to the Okanogan County Historical Society. In 1975 the society rediscovered the excellence of the Matsura collection while preparing displays for their new historical museum.

JoAnn Roe *is the author of the book*, Frank Matsura: Frontier Photographer (*Madrona Publishers, Seattle, 1981*).

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The Astral Kid and the Spirit Mine

Unearthly escapades in the search for gold

by Sally Springmeyer Zanjani

AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY, curious methods were sometimes used in the feverish search for gold. Many a prospector walked the Western earth with a dowser quivering in his hands, firmly convinced that an electric current was passing from his body through the stick to the hidden gold in the ground. And if a prospector pulsating with energy could be guided by mysterious electric currents, why could not a man in touch with unseen spirits receive even more reliable signals?

Bob Rohane, known to his fellow miners as the "Astral Kid," believed he did. When Rohane and his spirits got together, no time was wasted discussing metaphysical questions or exchanging pleasantries with deceased relatives—endeavors of more genteel spiritualists in Victorian parlors throughout America. Rohane's communications from his spirits concerned the one thing every mining man really wants to know: where the gold is and how to get it.

The "where," according to the spirits, was Stimler (later renamed Nivloc), the camp that sprang up when Shoshone prospector Tom Fisherman struck rich gold ore southwest of Blair in the Silver Peak region of Nevada's Esmeralda County. Learning of the find from Fisherman, prospector Harry Stimler located claims. The reputation of these two men, known for the discovery of Goldfield, set off a small rush in the winter of 1907–1908, and leasers were soon working some thirty-seven shafts, fifty to two hundred feet deep, along Stimler's big dike.

Possibly Rohane's spirits found the Stimler area especially congenial because nature herself had turned eccentric there. Volcanic eruptions in ages past had left the canyon strewn with boulders ranging in size from basketballs to massive rocks fifteen feet in diameter and in shape from perfect spheres to weirdly hollowed sculptural forms. The spirits pointed the Astral Kid to the precise spot in this bizarre landscape where he should take out a lease and commence excavations.

The "how" was a bit more complicated, for Rohane's spirits did not direct him to dig an ordinary tunnel by the usual methods. Since the spirits had an aversion to wheelbarrows, Rohane laboriously carried out in candle boxes every bit of rock and earth from the 125-foot tunnel he was digging. The tunnel was approached by a broad 150-foot trail called the "Spirit Walk," which Rohane had extended along the mountain. Lest visiting spirits be offended by an unkempt excavation, Rohane raked the trail, the top of the dump, and the tunnel floor with a nail-toothed rake and swept them smooth each day with a willow broom.

When Bob Rohane's spirits sent a message, they shunned old-fashioned devices. There were no rappings on the table, no ectoplasmic hands scrawling on the slate, and no spectral voices from the gloom. These spirits preferred the most modern method of communication—the telephone. Using three-foot stakes strung with baling wire, Rohane constructed two "spirit telephones" to facilitate daily communications. One ran into the tunnel, and the other stretched from the far end of the trail to the dump on the other side of the tunnel.

Rohane's devices may not seem particularly unusual to those familiar with spiritualist construction. One lively account of spiritualism describes such odd contrivances as an Ohio log cabin built according to spirit directions and outfitted with musical instruments for the spirits' boisterous concerts, a Super Ray spirit machine to heal the afflicted, and a New Motor operating by spiritualist power to supply the world with endless electricity. (Its mission failed when disbelieving New York villagers smashed the motor to bits.) In the Nevada mining world, however, spiritualism was a distinct novelty, and Rohane's fellows must have been amazed by his curious arrangements at the spot they called the "Phantom lease."

THE ASTRAL KID LIKED SOCIALIZING with mortals as well as communicating with spirits. Miners J. A. Riley, Jimmie Donovan, and Carl Mengel (familiarly known as the "Flying Dutchman") used to while away the time after supper playing cards until Rohane stopped by their camp when the principal entertainment of the evening began. "An enormous frame of a man with a large, well shaped head of shaggy, iron gray hair, he was a striking figure," Riley recalled in a 1911 letter to the *Goldfield Daily Tribune*, "and ...he gave us plenty of diversion in the long winter evenings."

Rohane would commence with a "little dissertation" on the evils of women, wine, and card playing. Many miles from the dance halls and saloons of Goldfield, the three men

ILLUSTRATION BY MARK A. FREDRICKSON

Rohane believed he had an astral body, an airy replica of himself, in which he could journey around the world.

could hardly fall prey to the first of these temptations, but the Astral Kid was constrained by no such spatial limitations. Like many spiritualists, Rohane believed he had an astral body, an airy replica of himself, in which he could fly forth from his physical body and journey around the world.

According to Riley, "It seems that he had to concentrate and that his head must be to the north and his feet to the south. The symptoms of his impending journey were manifested by zing-zing like chimes, or maybe a cowbell, as he described it, followed by a crash—bang—when Donovan used to whisper 'They're off,' and Mengel would say softly, 'He's goin' avay in his nostril.'"

Rohane apparently embarked in his nostril while in a trance, just as the famous nineteenth-century medium Helene Smith journeyed to Mars, astonishing her listeners with detailed accounts of the language, clothing, and lifestyle of the Martians she observed. But Rohane's destination was not Mars or the netherworld beyond the tomb where so many spiritualists were prone to travel. Perhaps he had read their descriptions and reached the conclusion that the netherworld sounded like a pretty dull place for a miner hell-bent toward temptation. Instead the Astral Kid headed for exotic and exciting spots like Honolulu, Melbourne, and Hong Kong, where he "invariably met many fair women." Listening to his vivid descriptions of these adventures was the next best thing to a night on the town. "He certainly was a tonic," said Riley, "and we missed him when he disappeared."

Rohane's disappearance occurred quite unexpectedly. It happened after he had finally struck ore, assaying at five or six dollars a ton, in a vein cut at the heading of his tunnel. Encouraged, the Kid toiled at his Phantom lease for several days with redoubled vigor. Then at 1:30 on an afternoon a sudden bulletin came from his spirits commanding him to go to Australia, pronto. Within an hour, he abandoned his spirit mine, his tools, and his camp, collected wages due him from a neighboring leaser, and walked off across the hills toward Blair, never to return. Reaching town in the late afternoon, he declared that he would walk on to Blair junction eighteen miles away. When various people tried to persuade him to wait and take the train the next morning, he said he was "in a hurry" and strode off.

In a hurry? That must have evoked some head shaking and pitying smiles from bystanders who thought it a piece of folly to top off the ten-mile hike from Stimler by wearing out shoe leather the whole night long. What did he expect to gain by it? A brief, comfortable train ride the next morning would set him down in plenty of time to connect with the northbound Tonopah and Goldfield train.

These scoffers were probably taken aback when the engine on the Silver Peak railroad met with an accident and failed to make her run from Blair the next day, while Bob Rohane's tall, lanky figure stepped aboard the Tonopah and Goldfield train at Blair junction on schedule. Perhaps this was to be expected. After all, thoroughly modern spirits who communicate by telephone are the kind who know whether trains are running on time.

Another curious fact remains: the bonanza was there at Stimler all the time, though it would lie undetected for nearly thirty years. After Rohane's disappearance, the remaining leasers struck a lower zone where the vein was badly leached out, and pay values decreased. The Astral Kid's hasty departure proved to be the first movement in an exodus which left the camp deserted for some years.

But below the leached-out vein lay a rich body of ore—the makings of the Desert Silver mine. No doubt, Rohane's spirits had concluded that candle-box technology was ill suited to deep excavation and had dispatched him to a spot where pay dirt lay closer to the surface.

An aura of mystery, tinged with superstition, clung to the spirit mine, and for years Bob Rohane's tools, candle boxes, dinner bucket, rake, and broom rested as he had left them at his tunnel, undisturbed by visitors to the camp.

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Sally Springmeyer Zanjani *is the author of* The Unspiked Rail: Memoir of a Nevada Rebel *published by University of Nevada Press. Her father was a lawyer in Goldfield during the boom days.*

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Western art in the White House

A selection of masterpieces from the permanent collection

by Clement E. Conger
with William G. Allman

Photographs courtesy the White House
Captions by the authors

AS THE OFFICIAL RESIDENCE of the President of the United States since 1800, the White House has become an important symbol of our American republic and a much-visited tourist attraction. Only in the last twenty years, however, has it housed one of the premier collections of American fine art and decorative art objects.

When Jacqueline Kennedy became First Lady in 1961, she occupied a White House filled with art which was almost exclusively portraiture of preceding Presidents and First Ladies plus a miscellany of other furnishings. Hoping to make the White House an important showcase of American material culture, she began soliciting contributions of fine paintings, antique furniture, and decorative objects, or of funds to finance their purchase. This program has been successfully pursued by her successors, particularly Mrs. Nixon, entirely without the use of government funds for acquisitions.

But the project has not been completed, especially in the collecting of American art. One of the goals in that area has been to assemble a collection representative of all geographic regions in the United States and of significant artists and styles. The first distinctively Western work acquired was Frederic Remington's vibrant cowboy bronze, *Coming Through the Rye*, a gift from members of the Amon Carter family in 1962. Since then, 18 paintings of the Far West and Alaska (9 of California), 3 paintings of the Plains and the Mississippi Valley, 5 paintings and 11 prints of Indian subjects, and 3 pieces of Western sculpture have been added to the permanent White House Collection. The Southwest

along with the Midwest and South, however, remain areas of the nation which are under-represented. Also, many fine American artists are unrepresented.

In the nineteenth century the United States Government had the opportunity to provide the White House with some great Western art. At the request of President Chester Arthur, Albert Bierstadt placed five of his paintings of Yellowstone and Yosemite in the Second Floor Hall of the White House in 1882. A House of Representatives Report called the paintings "illustrative of the grandest scenery in the country and... splendid specimens of Bierstadt's genius." In spite of a verbal agreement with the artist to buy these works, the Government never acquired them. Fortunately, the absence of a great Bierstadt Western scene in the White House Collection

A Day at the Seashore by William Hahn (1829–1887), oil on canvas, circa 1872–1878, White House acquisition, 1979
Born in Germany, Hahn trained at the academy in Dusseldorf where he painted in the company of such notable artists of the American West as Albert Bierstadt, George Caleb Bingham, and Worthington Whittredge (all illustrated in this article). From 1872–1878 he lived in San Francisco, establishing a reputation as a successful painter of genre and landscape. Genre painting was rarer in California than in the East; so Hahn's genre works, such as this sunny beach scene, are important documents of life around the economic and cultural center of the West in the nineteenth century.

Crossing the River Platte by Worthington Whittredge (1820–1910), oil on canvas, circa 1868, gift of C. R. Smith, 1967

Whittredge was one of three distinguished artists—John F. Kensett and Sanford Gifford were the others—to accompany the 1865–66 expedition of Major General Pope from Kansas across the Plains along the Platte River and Rocky Mountains to New Mexico. Back in New York, Whittredge painted from his field sketches this scene and at least one other of Indians at a ford on the Platte in Colorado, successfully capturing for his Eastern public the qualities of the Plains which so impressed him—"vastness and silence and the appearance everywhere of an innocent and primitive existence."

was recently remedied with the donation by The Barra Foundation, Inc., Philadelphia, of the splendid *View of the Rocky Mountains*.

The Western art is exhibited, as are all the other types of art in the Collection, throughout the building. Tourists visiting the public rooms may view elaborate bronzes by Frederic Remington and Charles M. Russell and portraits of Indians of the Plains by Charles Bird King on the Ground Floor; George Caleb Bingham's delightful river genre scene in the Green Room; and Bierstadt's monumental landscape in the Red Room. In their private quarters President and Mrs. Reagan enjoy landscapes of California, Wyoming, and Alaska by such renowned Western artists as Thomas Hill and Thomas Moran. In the West Wing the President, his top advisors, and their official guests may admire the grandeur of the West in works by Moran, Worthington Whittredge, and George Catlin. Those fortunate enough to be called into the President's Oval Office may also see Remington's *Broncho Buster*, which has been exhibited there during the last three administrations.

TWO OF THE WESTERN WORKS have associations with Presidents. The subject of Sydney Laurence's painting, *September Evening, Mount McKinley, Alaska*, was named in 1896 for presidential candidate William McKinley by an enthusiastic Republican prospector. McKinley's successor, Theodore Roosevelt, is actually depicted in an interesting oil on panel by Frederic Remington. Though perhaps best known

for his bronzes, the artist was a prolific illustrator and painted this scene en grisaille to accompany an article by Roosevelt in *Century Magazine* for May, 1888. Entitled *"Hands Up"—the Capture of Finnegan*, it portrays Roosevelt in 1886 in North Dakota, capturing an accused horse thief and his accomplices who had made the mistake of stealing Roosevelt's boat in an attempt to escape the vicinity.

Both of these paintings hang in the West Wing, largely in response to the great interest in Western art of President Reagan and his top advisors. But in this genre and others, the White House Collection is not large enough to accommodate the needs of each administration. Therefore, at the present time 117 paintings and 10 sculptures are on loan to the White House from museums and major private collections. Of these, 40 paintings and 4 sculptures are of Western subjects, approximately half of them borrowed since the beginning of the Reagan administration. To reduce this dependence on loans, which are always subject to recall, the White House continues to seek tax-deductible donations of a comparable number of great art works for the permanent collection.

It is certainly hoped that future donations will include works of Western art. Especially desirable would be additional examples of the work of such classic Western artists as Remington, Russell, Bierstadt, and Moran and of such presently unrepresented artists as Henry Farny, Alfred Jacob Miller, Seth Eastman, Cyrus Dallin, and others.

Donations of works by contemporary artists, however, are not accepted. The Committee for the Preservation of the

Hayne Hudjihini—Eagle of Delight—Oto *(left)* and **Petalesharro—Great Chief—Pawnee** *(right)* by Charles Bird King (1785–1862), oil on panel, circa 1822, gift of Sears, Roebuck & Company, 1962

In the 1820s the federal Government brought many Western tribal leaders to the East to impress and perhaps intimidate them with sights of power and wealth. When a delegation from the Missouri River region arrived in Washington late in 1821, Thomas McKenney, Superintendent of Indian Trade, commissioned Charles Bird King to paint portraits of eight of the visitors for inclusion in his Archives of the American Indian. These original paintings were destroyed in a fire at the Smithsonian Institution in 1865. Fortunately, King had painted copies of them for his personal use, five of which now hang in the White House Library.

OSCEOLA.

White House has established the policy that only works created at least twenty years ago by artists or craftsmen now deceased may be added to the permanent collection. This insulates the White House from the controversies of modern art and the arduous task of responding to the many living artists seeking the honor of having their works hung in the White House.

The White House Collection has reached its present level of prominence through the generosity of many public-spirited Americans. But in the area of art, a variety of works are needed to fulfill the goal of a well-balanced collection and to reduce the present dependence on loan objects. Anyone interested in offering a work of art for donation should address a letter to Clement E. Conger, The Curator, The White House, Washington, D.C. 20500, and include photographs, measurements, history, and provenance necessary for the work to be carefully considered by the Fine Arts Subcommittee of the Committee for the Preservation of the White House.

Pictures continue overleaf.

Clement E. Conger *is The Curator, The White House, Washington, D.C.*
William G. Allman *is Curatorial Assistant.*

Osceola of Florida *(opposite)* by George Catlin (1796–1872), colored lithograph, circa 1838, gift of *American Heritage*, 1962

In January of 1838 George Catlin traveled to Charleston, South Carolina, to visit Osceola, the imprisoned leader of the Seminole resistance to the United States Government's policy of moving eastern Indian tribes to lands in the West. Although stricken with malaria, Osceola posed in elaborate costume for Catlin, dying the day after the artist left the city. Back in New York, Catlin painted portraits of Osceola and prepared the stone for this lithograph.

Jerome, Arizona— Early Morning *(above)* by Randall Davey (1887–1964), oil on paper, circa 1954, gift of the Committee to Preserve the Randall Davey Estate, 1978

After establishing a studio in Santa Fe in 1919, Davey became an active proponent of the regional style. For his painting excursions in the Southwest, he used oil on paper to capture spontaneously his impressions of Western scenes. A frequent traveler to Arizona, Davey painted this scene of Jerome shortly after the close of the copper mines that had once made it a prosperous desert town.

September Evening, Mount McKinley, Alaska *(above)* by Sydney M. Laurence (1865–1940), oil on canvas, post-1903, White House acquisition, 1979

The gold rushes in Alaska and the Yukon in the late 1890s promoted interest among Americans in the nation's vast northern frontier. Laurence spent these years, however, as an artist-correspondent covering the Spanish–American War, the Boxer Rebellion, and the Boer War. Arriving in Alaska in 1903, he worked first as a photographer while prospecting for gold in the summers, but he soon turned again to painting. In 1914 some of Laurence's works, including views of Mount McKinley, were exhibited at the Smithsonian Institution, which helped to establish him as the foremost painter of Alaska.

View of the Rocky Mountains *(opposite)* by Albert Bierstadt (1830–1902), oil on canvas, 1870, gift of The Barra Foundation, Inc., 1981

One of the most recent and most important gifts to the White House Collection is this magnificent mountain scene shown in its location in the Red Room of the White House. Bierstadt first traveled in the West in 1859 with the Lander expedition into the Rocky Mountains in Wyoming. The large, panoramic studio paintings of the Rockies which the artist executed from the sketches made during this trip established him as the foremost painter of the West. Many of them, such as this scene, were composite views rather than depictions of specific locations. Bierstadt continued to travel throughout the West, sketching the mountains from Colorado to California to Alaska.

Green River Buttes, Wyoming *(above)* by Thomas Moran (1837–1926), oil on canvas, 1909–1910, White House acquisition, 1973

Early in 1871, the author of an article on the Yellowstone region asked Moran to enhance some sketches. The resultant desire to see the West led Moran to travel at his own expense to join the Hayden geological survey expedition to the Yellowstone. Moran's first sketches during the railroad trip westward were of the bluffs and buttes along the Green River in Wyoming, an area frequently visited by travelers riding the Union Pacific across the country. The artist continued to paint this colorful locale throughout a life of extensive travel in the West.

The Indian Sweat

Traditional purification ritual brings benefit to mind and body

by Andrew Weil
photographs by Marianne Greenwood

To prepare for tribal ceremonies, Navajo men undergo the purification rite of a sweat bath. In this scene (above) *three men ready their sweat lodge by packing dirt over the top. Half-sunk in the ground, the Navajo lodge has a sturdy roof of beams and earth shaped like a beehive oven. When the participants are ready, they will place red-hot rocks in a pit on one side of the circular interior and take their places across from them. After reaching their limit of dry heat, Navajos cool off between repeated heat sessions by rubbing their bodies with fine sand* (opposite).

In the Catalina mountains north of Tucson, Arizona, at the mouth of a rugged canyon running with spring melt, a great bonfire lights up huge boulders, casting lively shadows on sahuaros and mesquites. The full moon of April reveals a small hut nearby; it is made of willow poles laced together and covered over with canvas and blankets. A woman ties sprigs of sage on the framework of poles inside this little structure, while several men stand around the fire, playing flutes, drums, and rattles.

The fire has burned for almost four hours and will soon be reduced to a thick bed of coals. In amongst the coals are large rocks, now heated to red incandescence. The group of people, seven in all, draws together. They undress and crawl into the hut, taking positions in a tight circle around a central pit. One man remains outside. With heavy fire tongs he begins to fetch the glowing rocks, one at a time, carrying them to the lodge and carefully placing them in the pit. When a sixth rock is in place, he joins the circle, and the canvas and blankets are pulled tightly shut over the door to seal the group inside.

It is dark except for an eerie glow from the burning rocks. It is also stuffy and getting hotter by the minute. The people sit in silence, shifting bodies to find comfortable positions, adjusting to the heat, smelling the sage, thinking about being shut in such a tiny, airless space.

After a few minutes the leader speaks. He tells the group they have come together to share the experience of the sweat lodge, to feel high and healthy. He dedicates the ceremony to his father and grandfather and offers prayers to the four directions and to "Father Sky" and "Mother Earth." He sprinkles cedar incense on the rocks, filling the lodge with its fragrance. Then he dips a whisk in a bucket of water and splashes water onto the glowing rocks.

There is an explosive, spluttering hiss. The glow of the rocks fades abruptly, then returns. More water goes on. From the low ceiling of the lodge a wave of intense wet heat settles over the heads and shoulders of the group. A few people begin chanting in low voices, a steady hum and drone. Others make rhythmic noise with rattles. More water brings more explosions from the fire pit. The temperature begins to soar. This is nothing like the steady warmth of a sauna or steam room. There are brief bursts of unbelievable heat that envelop the body, then fade into the general steamy background. Water is splashed on the rocks with increasing frequency. In order to deal with the waves of heat, the group now begins to chant more seriously, using the sound as a focus for concentration.

At first the chant is a forceful, sustained OM, but as the heat increases it is broken by shouting, clapping, and whooping. Still the intensity of sensations escalates, until people begin to ask themselves, "How much more can I take?" "When will it end?" and even "Why am I doing this?" Then, suddenly, with a shout of *"Mitayuke oyasin!"*—a Sioux phrase meaning "All my relations!"—the leader announces that it is time for a break. The door is uncovered to let people crawl out of the steam and walk a short distance to plunge into a cold canyon pool. They whoop and holler even

The Navajos carefully prepare for the sweat bath, a formality of spiritual as well as physical significance. For the lodge, a circular area is dug and covered with wooden beams and earth (above). *Nearby a steady fire burns for hours, heating the glowing rocks needed for a sweat session. Beneath magnificent rock walls, a Navajo woman* (opposite) *gathers branches to be used for a sweat bath. They may provide the fuel to heat stones for the sweat lodge, or small boughs might be used to beat the skin of participants for increased invigoration.*

more on emerging from the cold water, then rest on rocks before going back into the lodge for another cycle of fire and steam with fresh rocks.

What is this ritual and why do people do it? It is a rather free adaptation of the Plains Indians' sweat-lodge ceremony, what the Sioux call the *inipi* ceremony, and it has become increasingly popular among non-Indians all over the West.

It is my own *inipi* lodge in the Catalinas that I have described. I have introduced many friends to it and have done sweats with many other friends in other states. As to the reason that I do it, I can only say that the feeling on finishing up a few rounds of this intense treatment is one of the most joyful, vigorous, healthy feelings I know, worth all of the trouble of preparation and intensity of scalding.

The Sioux use the *inipi* lodge as a religious and curing ritual. They sweat before battle and before ceremonies

The intensity escalates. People ask, "How much more can I take? When will it end? Why am I here?"

to purify themselves and increase strength. They say they feel the presence of the Great Spirit in the sacred circle of the lodge, and a medicine man will often take a spiritually ailing friend in the *inipi* to give him religion. The sweat will also cure many physical illnesses; I have seen it put a dramatic end to cases of flu, for example. It makes sense that the sweat lodge would alleviate the symptoms of a number of respiratory ailments, including colds, coughs, bronchitis, and hay fever. By greatly improving circulation and warming the extremities, it also treats arthritis and rheumatism. Furthermore, because sweating is a powerful method of ridding the body and blood of toxins, the *inipi* can give the body's own defenses a good assist in the cure of many other illnesses.

Sweating in one form or another is common around the world, from Siberia to Mexico, using systems as diverse as the steam bath and the modern electric sauna. Almost all forms of sweating are pleasant and healthful if done sensibly, but to my taste nothing compares to the *inipi* for a terrific high in body, mind, and spirit.

I first set foot in a sweat lodge on the Rosebud Sioux Reservation in South Dakota. It was the lodge of a strong medicine man, Leonard Crow Dog, who conducts a powerful *inipi* ceremony. Because it is essentially a spiritual ceremony, the Sioux sweat is a long and careful ritual, much more formal than that which my friends and I follow in the Catalinas. A Sioux sweat opens with long prayers, each participant invoking the aid of the Great Spirit while holding a peace pipe. The medicine man leads every aspect of the ritual and chants for the whole group. Only men enter the *inipi*. Women often tend the lodge from the outside, opening and closing the door and passing in paraphernalia. One of the distinctive features of the Sioux lodge is that it cannot be opened from inside. When the temperature finally becomes unbearable, a collective shout of *"Mitayuke oyasin!"* is the signal to the attendants to withdraw the heavy covers and release the steamed celebrants.

To the inexperienced and untrusting, an *inipi* ceremony can be an anxiety-provoking ordeal, especially if one is not certain that he will be allowed out. I had to deal with my own fears on this score on one memorable occasion when I did not get out as planned.

Once, on arriving at Crow Dog's Paradise in late November, I found Leonard eager to do a sweat because he wanted to cure a fellow medicine man of a drinking problem. He was sure that a good dose of the Great Spirit in the *inipi* would give this man the strength to resist. There were two others to join in, too: Leonard's father Henry and a young Indian from California who had come to Rosebud to learn Sioux ritual. The women were all off on errands, however,

To the inexperienced, an *inipi* sweat can be anxiety provoking, especially if one is not certain of getting out.

leaving no one to attend the lodge except Cousin Arthur, who was considered not all there and of questionable capability.

Arthur was a strangely beautiful man. He was of indeterminate age, probably in his late forties, had limited verbal abilities, but smiled often and wonderfully. His job around the Paradise was to tend the horses; he also whittled, and frequently sat humming to himself, lost in a kind of trance. Leonard was unsure that Arthur could manage the sweat lodge, especially that he could be counted on to open it when we screamed for all of our relations, wanting to be let out.

Arthur listened to Leonard's explanation and nodded gravely to assure us he knew what we expected. Leonard went over the procedure again and again, and Arthur kept nodding gravely. Finally Leonard drew the five of us aside and told us his plan: "I think he understands, but just to be sure, let's do a dry run first. We'll go into the lodge and pretend we're doing it. We'll pray, and I'll chant, but I won't put any water on the rocks. Then we'll shout *'Mitayuke oyasin!'* and see how Arthur does."

Thinking this a brilliant plan, we readied the lodge, brought many glowing rocks from the huge fire that Leonard had built, and filed in. Arthur nodded to each of us as we entered, as if to promise that we were in good hands. Our mock *inipi* ceremony was very impressive. We smoked the sacred pipe, prayed for everything and everyone, and listened to Leonard's deep intonations. Of course, it was plenty hot with just the glowing rocks; we could imagine what it would really be like if Leonard should throw big scoops of water on. At last we gave our shout. Right on cue, Arthur opened the lodge to let us out. Leonard praised and patted him, causing Arthur to beam with pride. Then, confident and reassured, we returned to the lodge for the real thing.

Now, even on ordinary occasions Leonard Crow Dog's sweats are intense. He is not a man to do things halfway. This occasion he considered special; he really wanted to sock it to his ailing colleague. As soon as Leonard started to pour on the water, I knew we were in for a hot one. You can tell by the explosive sound how much water has gone on and what is coming in a few seconds. Clearly Leonard was not going to beat around the bush. He was going to take us up to the heights right away.

There is another curiosity to this ritual that I should mention. I have often sensed a great unity of consciousness among the participants in an *inipi* ceremony. It is as though the intensity of the experience gives the group a single mind, if only briefly. One sign of this change is remarkable unanimity about the point when the limit is reached. Everyone always shouts *"Mitayuke oyasin!"* at the same moment without any prompting, and it is always just the right moment.

In fact, there may be some cue from the medicine man. Leonard Crow Dog and other good sweat leaders take the heat up in an accelerating tempo, letting everyone adjust to a new level but quickly going beyond it, building toward a searing crescendo. You get a sense of when the crescendo is coming and finally know it is just moments away when you hear an especially loud and long explosion of steam. Sometimes you can get through that last push only by telling yourself that relief is just around the corner. So if you are tuned in to the rhythms of the medicine man, and he has a good sense of the group, I suppose it is not surprising that everyone knows just when to give the shout that will open the door.

As I said, Leonard took us up to the peak very fast, and there was no question that it was going to be a spectacular peak. I don't think I have ever heard such a blast of steam. Our collective *"Mitayuke oyasin!"* was not long in coming.

Marianne Greenwood, who took the remarkable pictures used to illustrate this article, is a world-renowned Swedish photographer and author. After a successful career in Europe she decided some years ago to devote herself to recording the customs of isolated societies in word and picture. Ms. Greenwood's adventurous spirit has taken her all over the world to visit unique groups—to the jungles of Colombia to make friends with the "fierce" Motilones, to Peru to photograph the descendants of the Incas, to Guatemala to study the Caribs, to Lapland, to New Guinea. She is presently in Europe writing the text to accompany her photographs for a book entitled Vanishing Worlds, *to be issued by her Swedish publisher.*

(Opposite, top) *As the fire for the stones dies down to bright coals, two Navajos accommodate their friends inside the sweat lodge by tightly covering the entrance with blankets. After the sweaters have endured the dry heat to their limit, they rush out of the lodge to cool off* (opposite, bottom). *Between heat sessions, participants relax* (above), *their skin covered with sand to absorb perspiration. Before entering the lodge again, they will wipe off all the sand, removing at the same time any dirt and dead skin, leaving their bodies invigorated and ready for another trial by heat.*

After several heat sessions and cooling-off periods during a single sweat bath, the Navajos dust themselves a final time. Then, water may be spread over the body caked with sand and sweat to provide a mud bath before the mixture is washed away.

But nothing happened. In disbelief we screamed again, but the door stayed closed, leaving us sealed in boiling blackness. I have jumbled memories of bouncing about in the darkness against other bodies, battering on the walls of the lodge, shouting, and feeling indescribable heat. How long we were trapped I have no idea. Finally a square of light appeared, and we staggered out into the cold November air. I have one clear memory of Cousin Arthur standing by the door with an amazed look; he had never seen people make such an undignified exit from a sweat lodge.

The Sioux do not jump into water after a turn in the *inipi*. They just stand out in the wind—often very strong on that land—until they are cooled off and ready for another cycle. This time we just sprawled on the ground, gasping until we recovered. As soon as I got over the shock, I burst out laughing, and so did the others. The comedy of the situation cured us instantly. Never again would I worry about not being able

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The Indian sweat bath inspires a joyful, vigorous, healthy feeling, worth the preparation and scalding.

to get out of a Sioux sweat lodge.

Recently, I took a very different kind of sweat with a Navajo medicine man, Sam Boone, who lives in Flagstaff and has a permanent lodge on a beautiful piece of land in nearby Verde Valley. Sam was a Navajo code talker in World War II and has a rich fund of adventure stories. He also has considerable knowledge of healing plants and Navajo religion. The Navajo lodge is of sturdy construction, half sunk in the ground. It is shaped like a beehive oven, the roof formed of thick beams with a heavy coating of mud and straw. A large fire pit occupies one side of the circular floor, leaving a space on the opposite wall for four or five persons. The door is a wooden frame that can be covered with blankets.

Sam covers the sitting area with a thick blanket of fragrant, fresh herbs that he gathers the day of the sweat. He has his fire going before dawn so that he can begin sweating in early morning. This lodge is so well insulated that it heats up very fast after glowing rocks are placed in the pit and the door is sealed. Unlike Plains Indians, the Navajos take dry sweats. They do not throw water on the rocks but sit in dry heat until they reach their limit. They also pray and chant when they go into the lodge, and Sam prays for all of us each time he sweats: for the United States, for peace, for his tribe, for his fellow sweaters. He performs this ritual quite regularly, at least every Sunday and Wednesday.

Women are nowhere in sight at a Navajo sweat. It is an all-male affair that lasts through the morning. But the men leave some rocks in the fire for the women, who arrive after the men depart and use the lodge by themselves later in the day.

It is customary to go back and forth from a Navajo sweat, cooling off in between, then heating up again. To cool off, you lie in a shallow trough filled with fine sand or clay and rub it all over your body. It cools you down deliciously, absorbs the sweat, and rubs off dirt and dead skin, leaving you clean and invigorated. You must dust off well before going back in the lodge, because any accumulations of clay will turn into unbearable hot spots. After your last sweat and rubdown, you can wash off.

I enjoyed learning this ritual, especially under Sam Boone's able direction, and I am sure it is a good method for curing much illness. Still, I am sold on the Sioux version as a means of getting high and feeling fine. It is the *inipi* type of sweat lodge that seems to have caught on in the counterculture of the Western states, with the result that sweat lodges have become a standard feature of alternative communities and New Age gatherings.

For example, I attended a fall equinox celebration a few years ago at Healing Waters, a hot-springs resort in southeastern Arizona, where sweats were popular. The resort, dating from the early part of the century, had fallen into dilapidation and disuse when it was purchased in the late 1970s by a group of vegetarians. Since then it has been active and has hosted a number of countercultural events. The celebration I attended lasted two days, drew several hundred people, and included lectures and workshops on massage and herbs, group dancing and singing, raw-food meals, use of the hot baths, and access to well-run sweat lodges of the *inipi* type.

There were five lodges in operation, going nonstop in the mornings to accommodate the many people who wanted to use them. A crew of men tended the fire and provided enough red-hot rocks to keep everyone happy, while those who knew the ritual well served as leaders for groups of the less experienced. I had never before seen a mass sweat-lodge operation and was favorably impressed.

I have met several men who build portable sweat lodges out of light willow poles and canvas. They carry them on hikes and can set them up quickly by convenient streams and sources of firewood. A California firm even markets a new "trail sweat" of lightweight fiberglass and nylon components, suitable for backpackers and cross-country skiers. Clearly, sweating is in.

I am sure Indian medicine men like Leonard Crow Dog and Sam Boone are pleased to see more and more of us learning to build and use traditional sweat lodges. They know, as we are discovering, that nothing can make a person feel healthy, happy, and strong as fast as a good sweat. I have seen the sweat lodge effect instant cures of depression and anxiety. I have introduced people to it who were quite timid and doubting of their ability to "take it" and watched them emerge totally confident and rejoicing in their strength, eager for more. Leonard Crow Dog says he can cure alcoholism with his sweat lodge. Sam Boone has endless stories of medical successes with his. I do not doubt their testimony.

The sweat-lodge ceremony is a legacy to us of the Indians of the West, and though its use has declined among the people who developed it, it is certainly spreading among the rest of us. I do not know that we shall see a day when every neighborhood has its sweat lodge, but I do think more and more of us will be able to have this great experience if we want.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTE

A good book on sweating in general with details of methods used around the world is *Sweat* by Mikkel Aaland (1978). Descriptions of the Sioux *inipi* ceremony will be found in *Lame Deer, Seeker of Visions* by John (Fire) Lame Deer and Richard Erdoes (1976).

Andrew Weil, *a physician and researcher living in Tucson, has studied the Indian sweat ceremony since 1970. He is the author of* The Natural Mind *and* The Marriage of the Sun and Moon.

Out of a desert landscape

Open spaces and the human spirit

by Barry Lopez, photographs by Laura Gilpin

I REMEMBER THE FIRST TIME I came into the Great Basin deserts, saw the broad, white alkaline flats, the hard, bony mountains and sagebrush valleys. I was eleven years old and awed to silence by the breadth of space, by the overpowering stillness. I am affected by these things still: by a black sky brilliant with stars on a moonless night; the seeming desolation; the almost surreal quality of blotches of orange and green lichen on the dark face of an escarpment. The breathless quiet, the reach of this country, make everything seem more plausible. The feeling is of a stage, where imagination is neither impelled nor constrained.

The places we show our children, even momentarily, are vital to their imagination. The impact is one that Wallace Stegner puts succinctly: "Expose a child to a particular environment at his susceptible time and he will perceive in the shape of that environment until he dies."

At my susceptible time, my parents took me to the desert.

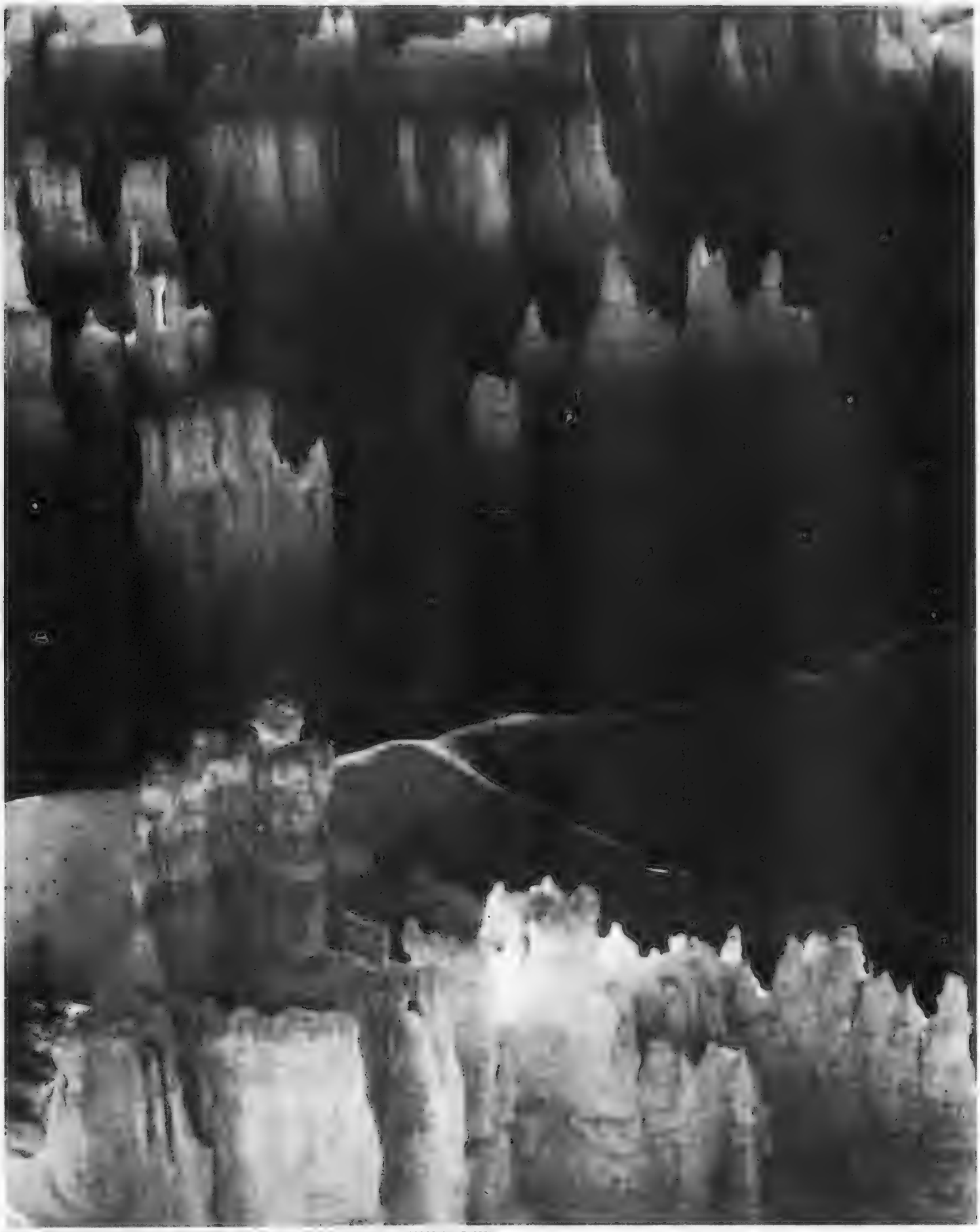
Each of us sees something different in the very same landscape. From such unique perceptions grow different apprehensions of the world; and we are exceedingly fortunate for this, I think. A diversity of understanding about the universe is probably as vital for successful human adaptation as is a diversity of genes. And sensing that our vision is deeply affected by the kind of landscape we mature in should move us to preserve a variety of landscape—not the spectacular and unusual alone but also what, like the deserts, are called wastelands.

I wonder, often, how the simple sight of land affects us.

Imagine vast, unbroken space, like that in eastern Montana. One of the events that critically shaped us historically was our stepping out onto the Great Plains. Nothing in art and little in literature had prepared us for such sudden, breath-taking space. In one of the most telling lines ever written about this phenomenon, George Catlin, on foot in Nebraska in 1832, evoked the ocean: "We have been out of sight of land for three days." He was as bewildered by the lack of physical borders as Coronado had been three hundred years before on the Staked Plains. Other Europeans wrote of fata morgana—"ten thousand buffalo wandered in a shimmering lake beneath imaginary cliffs." Nineteenth-century travelers took their bearings as though they were sailors, with sextant and chronometer. And plains-dwelling writers down to Ole Rölvaag and Willa Cather wrote of wrenching isolation there, and of terrifying winds.

Farther west, nineteenth-century landscape photographers such as William Henry Jackson and Timothy O'Sullivan grappled with the daunting proportions of Western landscape, often setting a human figure at the edge of a photograph for scale, as one might a meter stick. The coherent limning of outsize land became an American hallmark. And the persuasiveness of the notion of all-but-unchartable landscapes abetted a belief in an unending supply of natural resources. In more modern times, we have come to understand that these immense depths and heights and distances have much to do with the shape of native American natural philosophies, which some people now turn to in the hope of a native earth-wisdom. Knowing all these things, we must ask: Why haven't we sought to protect these unbroken American spaces, in the same way we have seen to the protecting of the ideas that shaped us by building libraries and archives?

I think it is because what is out there is not evident.



BRYCE CANYON, NO. 2, 1930. © AMON CARTER MUSEUM, 1981. COURTESY CENTER FOR CREATIVE PHOTOGRAPHY, TUCSON

BRYCE CANYON DETAIL, LOOK BETWEEN FORMATIONS, 1930 © AMON CARTER MUSEUM, 1981. COURTESY CENTER FOR CREATIVE PHOTOGRAPHY, TUCSON

Space is not tangible. It strikes us as neither apparent nor destructible, though seismic trails, power transmission lines, jet contrails, fences, and roads—each insignificant by itself—noticeably shred the continuity of space. Landscape is broken up into pieces. The loss is subtle, largely to the eye; but some believe it is a loss that registers on the human spirit as profoundly as the loss of a trace amount of zinc in the blood will affect the health of the human body.

Space, like darkness and silence, is a natural resource. It is principally because the human need for all three is more psychological than biochemical that the effort to preserve them has lagged so miserably, that the formal reasoning for their preservation has largely eluded us.

Look into the Great Basin. You can walk toward a mountain for two days, and never seem to draw any nearer. You can almost hear sunlight at noon, like a white noise. Stand in the Big Smoky Valley in central Nevada, or in dry China Lake in southeastern California, in the Sevier Desert in western Utah: nowhere outside the Arctic is the thrust of dimension and quietude so evident. When people who live here say laconically, "There's nothing out there," they mean there's nothing *else* out there.

Historically, we have run from such places. Open country, lying so far outside time, so unmeasurable, no water—it was intimidating. People went there only to sink mine shafts or to graze stock. To subjugate and own, to get rich. Now, a hundred and twenty-five years after the overlanders prayed to God just to get across them, people who have never been to the Western deserts are looking to them for something more valuable than silver ore or bunchgrass or oil shale: undisturbed, contemplative space. A place so quiet you can hear birds flying.

THE LAKOTA MAKE A POINT concerning *Wakan Tanka*, the Great Spirit, which is helpful in understanding the importance of any landscape. The Great Spirit, they say, is inherent in the land. In nature one sees various forces at work: a bolt of lightning shatters a yellow pine; a mule deer chews leaves of mountain mahogany; creek water splashes in a sandstone basin. These relationships, between lightning and trees, the deer and the plant, water and stone, are what are called *Wakan Tanka*. They reveal a spiritual realm within the physical landscape. A person aligned properly in this invisible realm is thought to be in a state of health. All his relationships are in good order.

Why haven't we sought to protect these unbroken American spaces, in the same way we have seen to the protecting of the ideas that shaped us?

A more Western approach to the psychological importance of landscape is taken by Paul Shepard, Avery Professor of Human Ecology at Pitzer College in California. A very good reason for preserving natural habitat, he argues, is that from paleolithic times people have used unmanipulated landscape (all, or most all, of its relationships intact) as a context in which to sort out abstract ideas, and bring them to life through analogy. Children still make their earliest and greatest strides in coming to grips with the human world through reference to the actions of animals.

Shepard's potent notion—that nature is crucial for the development of human intelligence—is currently being explored by psychologists. But I would like to turn back to *Wakan Tanka*, this unfathomable reservoir of relationships that binds all things—winds, white-footed mice, caribou, pentstemon, lynx, willows—together. A better translation of the Lakota words than "the Great Spirit," according to Elaine Jahner, is "the Great Mystery." It is the Great Mystery that is revealed in the physical landscape, in the coming and going of a beaver, in the set of a particular brown hill against an azure sky; and the most

BROKEN FLUTE COVE, COVE AREA, ARIZONA, 1931 © AMON CARTER MUSEUM, 1981 COURTESY CENTER FOR CREATIVE PHOTOGRAPHY, TUCSON

cogent reason for the preservation of natural areas, as has been stated repeatedly by various cultures for millennia, is that, immersed in the relationships there, we regain our spiritual senses.

Landscapes, in other words, can heal.

Urban psychologists have stated that one of the dangers of a highly industrialized society (like ours) is the reduction in demands on the individual imagination. Resourcefulness, self-motivation, and invention, we are told, are dulled—by television, by chemicals in our food, by an array of goods and services which are too readily available. An even more depressing picture of reduced spirit and imagination has been suggested by such writers as Jacques Ellul, the French sociologist. The Western deserts can be seen as a kind of therapy against this depression. The open space, where one can see clearly, releases the imagination. The opportunity to study mountains twenty miles away and then to look down at the sight of one's own hands engenders a feeling of privacy. At night, uncountable stars pulse sharp white in an inky sky, and the thought of other solar systems floating overhead suggests a passage of time that is slow, not urgent, not tyrannical. Enormous silence enhances the dawn song of a black-throated sparrow.

The desert is without the soughing of trees or the sound of moving water. It does not crowd. It implies life beyond one's own history and one's immediate culture. It reconfirms belief in an order beyond human mistakes.

Others have set down better than I can the need to preserve particular areas of the Western desert for the ecological variety they embrace; they have clarified the moral obligation to preserve wilderness stated by Aldo Leopold; in John Van Dyke's *The Desert* is a moving aesthetic argument for preserving desert country. Uwe George's *In the Deserts of this Earth* has evoked the physical landscape as almost an organism in itself.

I would like to add another reason. The space between discrete and distant objects (such as that between parallel mountain ranges), the deep silence, and the constellations visible in the clear air above the desert constitute a unique landscape. The human spirit reverberates there, raises questions, imagines, ponders, and orders as it does in no other place. Out there on an alkali flat you can see the earth bend into the horizon, watch golden eagles surge skyward in thermal elevators, trace the taproot of a mesquite 150 feet into the ground, stare into the moonlit eyes of a coyote, smell creosote after a rain, and wake up in a sudden bloom of wild flowers. The imagination dances there for some as it has never danced before, as it does for other people only in a rainforest, among coral reefs, or on the eastern face of Mount Katahdin.

Landscapes can heal. The Western deserts can be seen as a kind of therapy against depression. Open spaces release the spirit and imagination.

One evening I sat in a desert hot spring in northern Nevada. In the quiet, dusky light I thought about the journals of John Frémont. About tailing scars from mines in the Stillwater Range to the south. How men prefer the Great Basin now as a place in which to detonate atomic weapons, test nerve gases, build war machines, store poison.

I lay there in the gin-clear water, coming up hot from somewhere far below where magma oozed, feeling the chill of night on my skin. In the faint light a jackrabbit fled between two clumps of sagebrush. I stared at the empty space. I cleared my throat. I waited long moments for the sound to finally disappear and then rolled my head back, to search the darkening sky for the first trace of Boötes.

Barry Lopez *is a recipient of the John Burroughs Medal for distinguished natural-history writing. His most recent book is* Winter Count *(Scribners), a collection of short stories.*

California houses of gold

Elegant homes tamed the mining frontier

Text and captions by John Carden Campbell

ONE OF MAN'S MOST SATISFYING GRATIFICATIONS is a delightful place to *be*—to be himself, to be with friends, to be with a lover, to be with a family. In the nineteenth-century West, people built a variety of shelters in an attempt to meet their needs for stability and protection: log cabins in the mountains, sod dugouts on the prairies, simple clapboard rectangles along the dusty streets of frontier towns. Following the discovery of gold at Sutter's Mill in January, 1848, "home" meant a tent for the thousands of eager fortune-seekers who poured into the Mother Lode country of California.

After a season or two of roasting and freezing, the miners and other settlers built themselves rough shacks—usually just one room plus an outhouse, but better than a tent. And within a few years, those who had found their fortunes—either in mining, or more frequently as merchants and tradesmen in the towns that burgeoned overnight—began to build fine houses, based on the homes left behind in New England. Men settled down with wives and families, and this demanded a "real house." They required more space, but more particularly they required the feeling or essence of more stability, more dignity, and eventually, more elegance. So, the men built what I call "houses of gold"—not of the metal, but of the essence: the gold of human richness and pleasure and growth.

Dozens, perhaps hundreds, of these fine old homes remain near the foothills of the Sierra; they can be seen along Highway 49 between Mariposa to the south and Downieville to the north. The best examples are clustered between Sonora and Nevada City. I regard many of these houses as true classics of architecture: they are handsome, elegant, refined, and they are also good examples of solving problems. Centuries ago a famous Greek philosopher said that buildings should express or possess Firmness, Commodity, and Delight. Surely these houses do. Although made mostly of wood (there are a few brick and stone ones), they have lasted over one hundred years. While in the East that is not "old," in the wild West that is "old." So they are firm; they are also commodious and delightful. Rooms are spacious and tall-ceilinged; details are handsome and restrained.

Although these classic homes are not totally different from their forebears in the East, they do have their own characteristics that make them unique and in a sense set their own styles. The architecture covers a spectrum from Greek revival style houses built in the 1850s through transitional types to the almost outrageously ornate Victorian homes. But these latter houses do not represent, to me, the purest Gold Rush architecture, since Victorian houses can be found all over America and particularly in San Francisco. What cannot be seen all over America, what is unique to this Mother Lode country, are these houses with details and appearance brought from the East Coast but adapted to California.

In the 1850s, many homes in America were built in what is called the Greek revival style. What makes a Greek revival house, in part, is the detail—use of pediments and columns that relate to Greek architecture but are not slavish attempts to copy a temple. The columns are truly Greek, but the Greeks

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Freeman-Marling House, Nevada City

The porch of this classic "house of gold" (opposite) *communicates a sense of leisure and refinement. Greek columns, narrow clapboard siding, and French doors are all typical of the Gold Rush style of architecture. The overall design was borrowed from homes in the Deep South; similar porches could be found overlooking beaches in Mississippi towns such as Biloxi or Pass Christian. Purportedly built by several southern gentlemen who wished to avoid rougher elements of the mining community, the house was intended originally as a club and retreat and has sometimes been referred to as "Bourbon Lodge." Erected in 1852–53, it is probably the oldest frame house standing in Nevada City and is one of the most elegant in the area.*

PHOTO BY CRAIG BUCHANAN

PHOTO BY CRAIG BUCHANAN

Cady House, Sonora

The Cady house was entirely prefabricated in Virginia, then sent by sailing ship all the way around Cape Horn to be assembled on a hilltop overlooking the mining town of Sonora. A hardware merchant who moved to California in 1852, John S. Cady built the house in 1856.

As an example of Greek revival architecture, it is not so "Greek" as some; the columns are well-proportioned, but with square posts capped with a carpenter's capital that is less Greek than contemporary. However, the other detail inside and out conforms to the essence of Greek revival. Tall, graceful French doors replace windows, as they do in so many of the Gold Rush houses. In contrast to the liver-red color used so frequently to paint ornate Victorian homes, the all-white color scheme seen in the houses of gold along Highway 49 is simple, elegant, and beautifully enhanced by the rich green texture of lush plants.

An antique lamp and the shade of an old oak make the side entrance (above) *more hospitable than the home's imposing front entrance, and the porch seems to invite one to settle down with a mint julep to enjoy a cool breeze. Descendants of John Cady still own the 125-year-old house.*

PHOTOS BY MORLEY BAER

Dudley (Woods) House, Mokelumne Hill

Although the Dudley house stands on a supposedly unstable foundation of piled-up rocks, it has lasted nearly 130 years. One rarely sees elegance and refinement in a small house, old or new, like that in this one. Its structure embodies the three basic forms of all abstract art—the angle or pyramid (the roof), the straight line or cube (the walls), and the curve or cylinder (the pillars)—more purely than any other house I know. These basics are enriched by a board and batten building system; the beveled battens meet at the top in ogee arches, more Gothic than Greek. Doric columns are also unusual in such a small house. Inside, the view of room after room in series through a doorway (above, right) *demonstrates* enfilade*—a French architectural device, and the gracefully trimmed frames clearly reveal the Greek revival style.*

I discovered this house while I was in college in 1936, returning many times to see it over the years. In 1939, I photographed it in fair shape, and twenty years later while on a tour of Highway 49, I discovered it much deteriorated and for sale. Although I was not in the market for a weekend home, I felt compelled to buy it, which I did. I mixed contemporary with a few old furnishings and used modern color in the decorating, but have left the basic structure and even some of the original wallpaper undisturbed.

Although originally thought to have been built by Dr. O. T. Woods in 1853, the house may have been built by Allen P. Dudley and his wife, who filed a declaration of homestead on the property in April, 1861.

PHOTO BY CRAIG BUCHANAN

Coleman House, Grass Valley

The Coleman house is one of the most handsome homes in the gold country. The form is no longer a simple box; the details are more Victorian than Greek. The windows are windows and not French doors; the three-sided porch remains in the Gold Rush tradition, but the porch columns move away from Greek revival. The curved additions to the columns appear to be supports, but are very likely more decorative than structural. The railing, too, begins to reflect a Victorian sense of design, as do the urns and iron fence in front of the home.

The clipped ivy garlands and baskets have been maintained for over one hundred years; so, they must be considered part of the architecture. A classic example of symmetry, bold forms, refined detail, and elegant proportions, the house stands shining white, looking almost exactly as it did when it was finished around 1863 (opposite).

COURTESY HOWELL-NORTH BOOKS

never used them in the way they are used on an American home. Door and window frames reflect Grecian elements; without these interesting frames the rooms lack any more distinction than the usual contemporary box. The Greek revival house itself is usually a very simple form: a large or small cube, or series of cubes; from the Greeks have come the details—the columns, pediments, opening frames—and the symmetry.

Much of the Greek revival look was imported to the gold rush country through books on architecture and building. Many of the men who traveled to California to seek their fortunes in mining had made a living in the East as carpenters, painters, masons, plasterers, cabinetmakers, and other skilled tradesmen, and they soon put their skills to good use in Mother Lode towns. Carpentry books, with titles such as *The Practical House Carpenter* and *The Builder's Guide*, frequently contained complete plans for Greek revival style building. The wood details for a house were often brought physically from the East, either across the continent by wagon or around Cape Horn in ships. Mills to produce fine woodwork had not yet been established in the far West, and not until the 1880s and 1890s were woodworking mills available everywhere to turn out the trimmings needed for construction of a fine home.

WHILE THE GREEK REVIVAL STYLE and details were imported, the final result is Californian, or Gold Rush. That is to say, the style was adapted to the terrain and most particularly to the weather, especially to the hot, dry summers.

This adaptation resulted in a different appearance and when these changes took place it created, in a sense, a new style of architecture. You do not see houses in New England that look like these houses. The main difference is the almost ubiquitous use of a three- or four-sided porch to protect from the heat. It also appears that French doors were used in place of windows more frequently than in Eastern counterparts.

In a typical Gold Rush home, the porch roof shades the house, which has high ceilings (often about 12 feet) and a large attic. These factors combine to make it fifteen to twenty degrees cooler inside the house in one hundred degree heat. When the north-facing porch doors are open and a breeze blows through the tall trees frequently planted around such a home, it is even cooler—all this without a mechanical air conditioner. Here is the evidence of intelligence in action.

Another element specific to the Greek revival houses of the gold rush country is the use of narrow clapboard, only four to five inches wide. This is probably related to the scarcity of milled lumber when the houses were built, but the narrow siding happens to give a nice scale to the houses, so that it is difficult to say whether it was used purposefully for design reasons or was simply due to the limitations on the material. The siding adds a pleasing lineal texture to the appearance of the houses.

Through the 1870s the homes that were built in the Mother Lode area show a transitional style with elements of both Greek revival and Victorian design. The Victorian houses seen in the gold country were built in the 1880s or after.

Sonora, Jackson, Placerville, Auburn, and Nevada City-Grass Valley were always very vital small towns. They went from gold to lumbering, to deep-shaft mining and power products, and so remained viable communities, thus maintaining the houses of gold. The buildings were not abandoned to fall apart from disuse, although too many have met their fate at the hands of wrecking crews.

I first discovered these beautiful homes in the 1930s when I was in college preparing to be a designer. I studied them, sketched them, photographed them. The houses attracted me because they represent a high standard of design and reflect a period that was a major part of the growth of California. Rivalling the historic houses of New England in their quality and elegance, they illustrate, in their own way, the validity of change, growth, creativity, and human adaptability to new environments. And although much of their design came from the East, these homes carry a new character that bespeaks of a

PHOTO BY CRAIG BUCHANAN

Marsh House, Nevada City

From Greek revival toward a more flamboyant period: the house is still simple, still white (and green), still a pure box form, and still symmetrical, but this is now embellished with a belvedere of tiny arches on the roof. The pediments over the second-story windows are vestiges of those on classical Greek temples, but the overall style of the house would be called "Italianate." It was built in 1873 by Martin Luther Marsh, who first went to California in 1850 as a carpenter and proceeded to make a fortune in the lumber business. He had the house copied from a book that described Italian villas; everything was formed in wood to imitate the stone and stucco of the true Italian style.

The home stayed in the family and was restored in the 1950s by Marsh's granddaughter, Mrs. James Christie, who held a sit-down dinner for 175 people to celebrate the hundredth birthday of the house. Surely this demonstrates how these houses of gold reflect the refined and gracious way of life in the 1870s, quite in contrast to the "wild West" of twenty years earlier.

PHOTOS BY CRAIG BUCHANAN

special flair for living.

While I am a staunch advocate of architectural preservation, I am also totally opposed to living in the past. Living in one of these fine old homes today, we can keep and respect the valuable vintage structure and furnishings, but live in our own time, creatively and probably more colorfully. It is very satisfying to me to be in and use an old house, but thoroughly stultifying to fill it full of the refuse of the past. Select what is valid for yourself.

These charming old homes, so wonderfully elegant and refined in the midst of the California wilderness, are not New England houses, nor are they California coastal houses; they are houses of gold, still intact and well-worth saving, seeing, and living in.

John Carden Campbell'*s long list of honors for outstanding design achievements includes three awards for his work in restoring old homes and other historic buildings in California. His book* Houses of Gold *was published by Howell-North Books in 1980.*

When Mrs. Christie restored the Marsh house, she gathered as many authentic artifacts and furnishings as possible to recapture the Victorian atmosphere. In the dining room (above), *all furnishings are of the period except the light fixture, and nineteenth-century paintings and prints have been hung. The plan of the house is formal: four principal rooms on each floor surround a central hall that is graced by a stairway with solid mahogany railing* (upper right). *In the bathroom are the original zinc-and-tin bathtub and ornate, 1873 water closet* (lower right). *This home in Nevada City is one of the few houses of gold that admit visitors, by appointment.*

George R. Stewart Western Writer

An appreciation of a remarkable author

by Wallace Stegner

OF GEORGE STEWART'S twenty-eight books, I find that I have seventeen on my shelves. Some of them I have read only once. Eight of them I have just re-read, to remind myself of George's historical and fictional methods. Three or four of them I read all the time, and refer to, and quote, and steal from, and could not get along without.

Today, about a year and one-half after his death on August 22, 1980, I am tempted to think of him as a writer who during his life received less attention than was due him; and that temptation, born of friendship and the respect I have for him, is not entirely without justification. He was a much more important writer than the general public knew.

Stewart's interests were essentially regional, and his books reflected his interests; and so his readers and his reputation tended to be regional also. He hit only a few of the jackpots by which writers become famous or notorious. His private life was serene and his habits scholarly, so that he made no copy for the gossip columnists. He would not have known how to behave if he had been lionized. His approach, whether to history or to fiction, was the reverse of sensational. He was thorough, objective, judicious, all qualities that are likely to get a man ignored in the book-news media. Personally and artistically, his impulse was to efface himself. And he never in his life wrote a book that capitalized on a fad or tendency. His books were totally his own. He never went for an audience; he let it come to him.

Nevertheless, it would be doing him and his reputation a disservice to call him an ignored or overlooked writer. He had his modest share of the rewards and notice by which serious readers and critics and colleagues, the durable audience, pay their respects to substance and worth.

PHOTO BY AUERBACH COURTESY MRS. GEORGE R. STEWART

George R. Stewart is pictured working on a manuscript about the year 1950, after he had gained critical and popular acclaim for fiction as well as historical works.

In 1938 the Commonwealth Club of California awarded him its Gold Medal for *East of the Giants*, a novel that is a paradigm of California history from Mexican colonialism to American statehood. In 1936 it had given him its Silver Medal for *Ordeal by Hunger*, the story of the Donner-Reed party. Properly, the medals should have been reversed, for *Ordeal by Hunger* is the more enduring book, but never mind. The point is that the Commonwealth Club, which gives recognition to California writers, recognized him twice, and early, as a California writer of stature.

Stewart's greatest popular success came with the novels *Storm* (1941) and *Fire* (1948), both Book-of-the-Month Club choices and both best sellers. Twenty years after *Fire* an altogether different sort of book, the study of waste-disposal problems entitled *Not So Rich as You Think*, received the Sidney Hillman Award medal, though it was enough ahead of its time (a common weakness of Stewart books) so that it did not become a major document in the environmental movement. In 1972 the California Historical Society presented him with its Henry R. Wagner Award medal in recognition of his long and distinguished career as an interpreter of California history. Walkers along the sea on Thornton State Beach will find a trail dedicated to him. And in the latter years of his life he was honored by the United States Board of Geographical Names, the Association of American Geographers, and the American Names Society for his work on place names.

All of which is to say that for nearly fifty years he was a name, a presence, a quietly distinguished part of San Francisco's distinguished literary tradition. If they heard less of him in New York,

(Continued on page 67)

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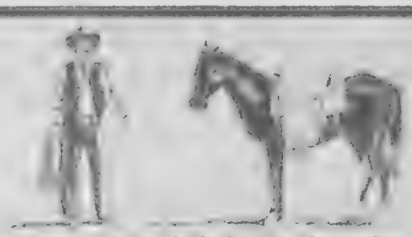

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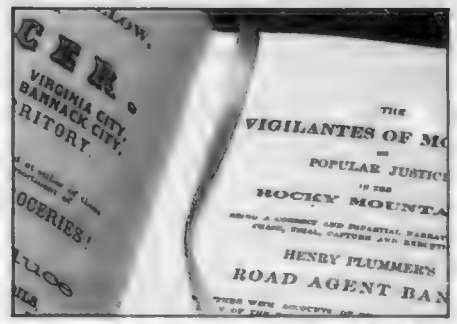

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and if he was never elected to either the American Academy of Arts and Sciences or to the National Institute and Academy of Arts and Letters, why that was their error and their loss. Equivalent achievement, if he had lived on the East coast, would have insured his election thirty years ago.

For there is no way around those several books, adequately recognized or not, which many of us find indispensable. *Ordeal by Hunger* is *the* history of the Donner party, which closed in tragedy the first act of the American occupation of California, and it is not likely to be replaced by any future study. *The California Trail*, though it was written to order as one of a series, is the best single-volume history of the overland migration to California, and is likely to remain so. And *Names on the Land*, a unique book, is the only study we have of how we went about putting our marks on the unnamed continent, and in doing so both added ourselves to the continent and added the continent to ourselves. It can be read as a gloss on Robert Frost's poem "The Gift Outright," with its theme of a people "possessing what we still were unpossessed by," and how we learned to give ourselves "to the land vaguely realizing westward."

GEORGE STEWART TESTIFIED that of all his many books he liked *Names on the Land* best. As usual, his judgment was sound. That book best expressed his interest in history, his curiosity about the web of organizational structures by which we not only create our institutions but leave tracks and names behind, the sociological and psychological and verbal impulses that permeate and direct such a massive and unpremeditated act as the investment of a continent. Habit, fashion, accident, ritual, poetry, humor, all played a part in the naming, and the naming process—as Stewart saw when no one else did—subsumed our history as a people. Nobody ever wrote such a book as *Names on the Land* before, nobody has written one since.

Besides those three that I could not do without, there are many other books of solid worth and astonishing originality. For those who have missed him, here is the record:

Seven novels: *East of the Giants*, *Doctor's Oral*, *Storm*, *Fire*, *Earth Abides*, *Sheep Rock*, and *The Years of the City*.

Four biographical works: *Bret Harte, Argonaut and Exile*; *John Phoenix, Esq.*; *Take Your Bible in One Hand: the Life of William Henry Thomes;* and the Plutarchian *Good Lives*.

Four histories: *Ordeal by Hunger*, *The California Trail*, *Committee of Vigilance*, and *Pickett's Charge*.

Four books on names and naming: *Names on the Land*; *American Given Names*; *American Place Names, A Concise and Selective Dictionary*; and *Names on the Globe*.

One book, more or less unclassifiable, that I shall call historical anthropology: *Man, an Autobiography*.

A study of waste disposal: *Not So Rich as You Think*.

A study of the loyalty-oath controversy on the Berkeley campus in the 1950s: *The Year of the Oath*, done in collaboration with others.

Three books that can be loosely labeled "description and history": *U.S. 40, Cross Section of the United States of America*; *N.A. 1*, a two-volume guide to the North-South Continental Highway; and *American Ways of Life*, made up of lectures Stewart gave in Athens during a year as a Fulbright lecturer.

A handful of lesser books, spin-offs of Stewart's lifetime interest in Western history and Western writers.

It is a formidable life-work, no part of it trivial or hasty, the best of it solid, lively, eminently readable, eminently dependable, and at least one book of it unique. Almost all of it is focused on California, most especially the Bay area. Of the seven novels, only *The Years of the City* has a non-California locale. Of the histories and biographies, only *Pickett's Charge* and *Good Lives* concern themselves with non-California people and events. Even *Names on the Land*, though like the two highway-guide books it ranges across the whole continent, has a strong list to westward, partly because the American people flowed that way, partly, one is sure, because George Stewart's own inclination was westward.

Stewart was a Californian by adoption, as are millions of others, but of long standing. Born in Sewickley, Pennsylvania, in 1895, he was brought to southern California in 1907, at the age of twelve. Except for his years as an undergraduate at Princeton and as a graduate student at Columbia, he was a California resident the rest of his life. Azusa and Pasadena shaped his boyhood, and a single year as a graduate student at Berkeley in 1919–1920 shaped his career, for it put him under the tutelage of Chauncey Wells, who taught him to love literature and writing, and Herbert Bolton, who introduced him to California history.

Something, perhaps the conviction of his Vassar-graduate mother that the East could teach him more than Berkeley could, sent George after one year to Columbia, where he received his Ph.D. in 1922. His dissertation was—of all things—on "Modern Metrical Techniques as Illustrated by the Ballad Meter," an inoculation that clearly did not take. A year as an instructor at the University of Michigan, during which he became engaged to Theodosia Burton, the daughter of the university's president, gave him his teaching apprenticeship. When the job at Berkeley for which he had been aiming opened up, he took it, and a year later brought his young wife West on the first of many cross-country trips, and they settled where he belonged. They never left.

THE FIRST WRITING PROJECT he involved himself in, a comprehensive study of the gold rush period, very quickly proved too big even for young ambition. It finally reduced itself to Stewart's first book, the biography of Bret Harte, which, fragment or not, is still the authoritative biography. But having been cut back, the gold rush

Stewart took the long view, with a vengeance, and he was remarkably free of Chicken-Littleism and personal spite against the universe.

theme began to grow again. It was never really abandoned, only divided into manageable portions, and much of what Stewart wrote later was part of it or an extension of it. The Donner Party book, the California Trail book, the history of the Committee of Vigilance, the biographies of Harte, John Phoenix, William Henry Thomes, and (in *Good Lives*) of John Bidwell, are all related to it. So, in part, is *East of the Giants*. So are most of the editions of early diaries that Stewart prepared, with introductions, for the Bancroft Library, the California Historical Society, the Book Club of California, and other organizations. In addition, much of that part of his work which is fictional, not historical, is set in the corridor between Donner Pass and San Francisco. Donner Pass, George used to say, was *his* pass. He invented it.

In a career as coherent and disciplined as this, it is hard to tell cause from effect. Did California history interest George Stewart because it demonstrated the strains and lesions, the violence and disintegrations, the difficult improvisations, of a society in the process of being transplanted, mixed, and reconstituted? Or did he acquire his interest in the processes of social organization and accommodation through his long study of the California frontier? It hardly matters which way we read it, but it is of the highest importance that we do not overlook those social processes, whether disintegrative or integrative, for they are central to book after book, both historical and fictional.

All of Stewart's California books, diverse in subject, are closely related in theme. Whether they are about storms or forest fires in the Sierra or about a poet being spiritually acclimatized in the Black Rock Desert or about the fate of a Greek city in the sixth century B.C., they reflect the same informed, retentive, curious, speculative mind. The theme never strays far from an examination of the bonds that hold human beings together in families, tribes, cities, or civilizations—how they are forged, how they hold, how they break, how they may be renewed.

In almost every way—in subject, in method, in attitude—George Stewart was about as far as he could get from the rebellious and dissatisfied stance that in the twentieth century we have come to associate with writers. Changes in society did not fill him with despair or indignation—he expected them, his cyclic view of history incorporated them. He was not agitated about such clichés as "post-Christian man" or "post-industrial man." As he indicated in *Man: An Autobiography*, on the long curve of human development such deviations did not even show. He took the long view, with a vengeance, and he was remarkably free of both Chicken-Littleism and personal spite against the universe.

"Poet and precisionist," his friend Joseph Henry Jackson called him. Precisionist he was, but if poet, then a very apollonian poet, more an old chief than a young warrior, more on the side of wisdom, restraint, negotiation, and compromise than of intransigeance and direct action. His defect, or advantage, was that he had studied history. He would have agreed with Robert Frost that there are no new ways to be new. He would have appraised every latest revolutionary discovery in the light of the long slow ages. And he had a constitutional inability to be emotional, partisan, or rabid. His impulse was precisely the other way: to be judicious, to examine evidence, to hold his fire, to be wary of taking either offense or sides.

That impulse reveals itself in nearly all his works but is most evident in the works of history which touch on topics the historians have chosen to quarrel about. In fact, whenever he came across such a topic, Stewart had an inclination to get all the witnesses together, read all the papers, and see if he could straighten the quarreling factions out.

Take, as an example, the cannibalism of the Donner Party and in particular the character of the German Keseberg, whom the conventional historians have made a scapegoat and a ghoul. Of all the members of the party, he is the least easy to love. He fell further into bestiality, he survived longer, he partook of more man-meat. He was reported to have remarked about Tamsen Donner that she was the best he ever ate, he was suspected of killing a child who was put into his filthy bed in that filthy hut on Donner Lake.

But Stewart, pondering the disintegration of human beings under the harshest conditions, noting how sociability and comradeship gave way to suspicion and hostility; and how shrinking supplies led first to hoarding and then to heartlessness and then to cannibalism and then to the toasting of the hearts of dear relatives over the fire—noting moreover how nearly every member of the party who survived, survived by eating the

dead to some extent—is willing to give Keseberg the benefit of the doubt. He understands the effects of starvation, hardship, solitude; he knows how a man under those circumstances could be crazed and irrational; he believes that many men, in the same circumstances, would show no better than Keseberg did. In that dreadful tragedy he chooses to find no scapegoat, though he finds several heroes.

Or take the Committee of Vigilance, often described by historians as outlawry in the name of the law. Without condoning or softening the harshness of those hangings, Stewart never forgets the provocations, the arrogance of the lawless Sidney Ducks, the venality of some parts of the apparatus of justice. As evidence of a curious sort of impersonality in the Committee, and its lack of a lust for power, he notes the fact that with the city more or less in its hands, the Committee of Vigilance voluntarily disbanded. Stewart does not exactly condone vigilantism; he simply reports the facts of the history of this example.

There is another kind of history to be examined in George Stewart's work—not the kind that makes a judicious review to eliminate partisanship and weigh evidence and separate facts from prejudice and determine what truly happened in some given situation, but the kind that nobody ever noticed, or noticed so partially that its importance was never made clear. We come to that in *Names on the Land*.

"Once," Stewart begins, "from eastern ocean to western ocean, the land stretched away without names. Nameless headlands split the surf; nameless lakes reflected nameless mountains; and nameless rivers flowed through nameless valleys into nameless bays." Like many of the ideas that he hammered into books, that one is a commonplace—the sort of commonplace we never think to examine, also the sort of commonplace which, looked at steadily, begins to glow with strangeness and wonder.

After millennia of occupation by Indian tribes, after the surges of European exploration and imperial wars, after the rise of the mongrel American republic which took over most of what the empires had quarreled over, that blankness was filled.

> The names lay thickly over the land, and the Americans spoke them, great and little, easily and carelessly—Virginia, Susquehanna, Rio Grande, Deadman Creek, Sugarloaf Hill, Detroit, Wall Street—not thinking how they had come to be. Yet the names had grown out of the life, and the life-blood, of all those who had gone before.... In older countries the story of the naming was lost in the ancient darkness. But in the land between the two oceans much of the record could still be read—who gave the names and when, and even why one name was given rather than another.

What Stewart understood was that nothing is comprehended, much less possessed, until it has been given a name, either casually as in Bear Creek (the creek where someone saw or shot or was attacked by a bear), or formally as in El Pueblo de Nuestra Señora la Reina de Los Angeles de Porciuncula. Coming at different times, from different branches of European culture, we brought different languages, different habits, different preoccupations, to our naming practices, and we heard the native tongues in different ways and translated native names differently. Moreover, mapmakers back in Europe often created or perpetuated errors, simply because they did not understand or could not read the maps and descriptions from which they worked. Champlain's Frenchmen discovered and named a little river flowing into Lake Champlain, calling it "La Mouette," the seagull. But a mapmaker misread it, seeing l's where t's should be, and made it into the meaningless word Lamoille. Though the headwaters of one branch of the Lamoille flow out of a pond on a Vermont farm I have owned since 1938, I confess it did not occur to me to wonder what the river's name meant until *Names on the Land* informed me that it meant nothing.

Our history, our tradition, the story of our five-hundred-year love/hate struggle with the North American continent, are all there in the names we have put on the land. "Bury my heart at Wounded Knee," says a poem by Stephen Vincent Benét. Yes. Or at Spuyten Duyvel, or on the banks of the Picketwire, or on Año Nuevo Island, or in the Wah Wah Mountains, or wherever American energy has intruded and American feet have trod. *Names on the Land* will suggest plenty of choices.

For *Names on the Land*, even more than other books by George R. Stewart, is provocative in the best sense. It makes a reader look at things he has taken for granted, it stretches the mind with analogies and possibilities, it is made luminous by the learning brought to bear upon a single aspect of our incomparably complex heritage. It is never guilty of losing sight of the forest while concentrating on the trees. Though Stewart was a master of detail, never losing one, never forgetting its importance, he makes details serve the large and steadily seen ends with which he began. As historian or novelist, anthropologist or pundit of place-naming, he is consistently an expositor and defender of the human capacity for cooperation and organization and long memory which flowers as civilization. His books teach us who we are, and how we got to be who we are. ✡

A fourth edition of George R. Stewart's Names on the Land *will be issued by Lexikos Publishing, San Francisco, in July. A longer version of the foregoing essay will appear as the introduction.*

Wallace Stegner, *born in Iowa and brought up on the fly in North Dakota, Washington, Saskatchewan, Montana, and Utah, is the author of many novels, of which* Angle of Repose *was a Pulitzer Prize winner in 1972, and* The Spectator Bird *winner of the National Book Award in 1976. He has also written extensively of Western problems and Western history. He and George Stewart were friends for forty years.*

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The Way We Lived: California Indian Reminiscences, Stories and Songs, *edited with commentary by Malcolm Margolin (Heyday Books, Berkeley, 1981; 209 pp., illus., notes, $12.95 cloth, $6.95 paper).*
Love songs and death chants, prayers and speeches, myths and reminiscences weave a colorful picture of life among the hundreds of different Indian tribal groups in California. The diverse environments of the area—from northern salmon-rich rivers to southern deserts—yield a similar diversity of cultural styles and philosophies, many all but lost, recreated here in a rich anthology.

Sentinel of Silence: A Brief History of Fort Spokane *by David H. Chance (Pacific Northwest National Parks Association, Coulee Dam, Washington, 1981; 59 pp., illus., biblio., $4.75 paper).*
This brief narrative offers a fascinating glimpse into the daily life of soldiers and the routine operations of a frontier fort in the 1880s.

Texas West of the Pecos, *photographs and text by Jim Bones, Jr. (Texas A & M University Press, College Station, Texas, 1981; 136 pp., illus., $29.95).*
Ninety-six large, beautiful, color plates vividly display the landscape of one Texas region. Bones's text describes the vast geological history of the area and his experiences while photographing its barren loveliness.

That Awesome Space: Human Interaction with the Intermountain Landscape, *edited by E. Richard Hart (Westwater Press, Inc., Salt Lake City, 1981; 147 pp., illus., $8.95 paper).*
The title of this collection of short but penetrating essays refers to the vast open country that stretches from the Rocky Mountains to the Sierra and Cascade ranges. The essays, which arose out of a 1980 conference sponsored by the Institute of the American West, Sun Valley, Idaho, explore such diverse aspects of the wide open spaces as Western art, movies, photography, history, urban growth, and contemporary issues related to the West's unique character.

Nevada Lost Mines and Buried Treasures *by Douglas McDonald (Nevada Publications, Las Vegas, 1981; 128 pp., illus., maps, index, $5.95 paper).*
Here are enough legends of lost treasures to arouse the fortune-hunter in any reader. Engaging old photos and sketches, along with a number of maps showing where treasures are purportedly hidden, add to the intrigue.

Mountain Climber: George B. Bayley, 1840–1894 *by Evelyn Hyman Chase (Pacific Books Publishers, Palo Alto, California, 1981; 173 pp., illus., maps, notes, biblio., index, $12.95).*
Bayley's story is told largely in his own words through liberal excerpts from his journals. He chronicles the challenges, terrors, and gratifications of his 1883 conquest of Mount Ranier and other difficult ascents of Western mountains. Bayley's activities as San Francisco businessman, naturalist, geologist, artist, and one of the founders of the Sierra Club are also highlighted in this fast-paced biography.

Warm and Tasty: The Wood Heat Stove Cookbook *by Margaret Byrd Adams (Pacific Search Press, Seattle, 1981; 227 pp., illus., mail order guide, index, $6.95 paper).*
A charming, historical anecdote introduces each recipe, telling something about the traditions connected with the food. Although designed especially for use on an old-fashioned, wood-burning heat stove, these tempting recipes can be modified easily for cooking on a contemporary kitchen range. Safety tips for use of a wood stove are included.

Chief Joseph Country: Land of the Nez Perce *by Bill Gulick (The Caxton Printers, Ltd., Caldwell, Idaho, 1981; 316 pp., illus., maps, biblio., index, $29.95).*
This large, attractive volume is packed with historical information and photographs depicting the tribe's crucial relationship with the expanding United States in the nineteenth century. Gulick's readable, sympathetic text

(Continued on page 75)

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frozen sea to their
private fishing holes.
He has felt the frigid cold of a
harsh and incompatible environment.
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and has been given an Eskimo name.
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He understands what their
future holds for them and
is anxious to share their
proud story. As an exploring
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By 1876, five thousand Sioux Indians had crossed the Canadian border seeking amnesty and fleeing the wrath of the United States 7th Cavalry after the Indian victory over General George Custer. In December, under orders from Ottawa—James M. Walsh, with six officers and guards, courageously confronted a strong band of two thousand Sioux. It was the main body that included the fierce warriors of the great leader Sitting Bull. Sitting Bull denounced the American cavalry in bitter rhetoric but promised that he would do no wrong in the land of the Great White Mother. He had "buried his weapons on the American side." This was a fragile moment among the various tribes in that region. The buffalo herds were rapidly diminishing. Unrest was prevalent. Lorenzo's beautiful new painting depicts this historical meeting of James Walsh with Sitting Bull. Walsh, superintendent of the Northwest Mounted Police, dressed in the resplendent red and gold tunic of the mounties, leans forward and negotiates with the assembled Indian chiefs. Behind Sitting Bull are other important chiefs such as Spotted Eagle, Gall and Crazy Horse and the dreaded Assiniboine leader, Whitedog. Sitting Bull admires Walsh's great bravery and concedes to the redcoats laws and wishes—a bond of trust remains.

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Books in Brief *(Continued from page 70)*

unfolds the epic drama of the Nez Percé people from their acquisition of horses, through a long-standing friendship with white settlers, down to the tragic Nez Percé wars and into the present day.

Train Robbery: The Birth, Flowering, and Decline of a Notorious Western Enterprise *by Richard Patterson (Johnson Books, Boulder, 1981; 239 pp., illus., notes, biblio., index, $7.95 paper).*
Trains running through miles of desolate Western land posed easy targets for bandits, who were often considered as especially romantic figures in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Patterson fills his book with colorful and dramatic descriptions of clever plots, daring robberies, and badmen brought to justice.

The West as Romantic Horizon *by William H. Goetzmann and Joseph C. Porter, with artists' biographies by David C. Hunt (University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, 1981; 128 pp., illus., index, $34.50 cloth, $18.95 paper).*
The InterNorth Foundation art collections, introduced in this beautiful volume, include the work of nearly every significant artist of the Western frontier. Thirty-eight fine, color plates reproduce works by Alfred Jacob Miller, Karl Bodmer, and other painters. Goetzmann and Porter present the idea that these artists played an important role in developing nineteenth-century romanticism and contributing to both the knowledge and mythology of the frontier West.

The Ring of Fire *by David Ritchie (Atheneum, New York, 1981; 258 pp., illus., glossary, biblio., index, $14.95).*
Earthquakes in the San Francisco Bay area and the eruption of Mount Saint Helens are among the cataclysms described in Ritchie's dramatic account of the geologic forces moving under "the violent shore" of the Pacific rim.

Marin: The Place, The People: Profile of a California County, *text by Jane Futcher, photography and design by Robert Conover (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York, 1981; 171 pp., illus., index, $24.95).*
Attractive color plates, with a few historic black-and-white photos interspersed, evoke the moods, the light and color of the seacoasts and rolling hills of Marin County, California, just north of San Francisco. The text completes the portrait through descriptions of the various towns in Marin County, bits of historical data, and quotes from interviews with some of the county's contemporary residents.

Deadwood: The Golden Years *by Watson Parker (University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, 1981; 302 pp., illus., maps, notes, biblio., index, $24.00 cloth, $10.95 paper).*
Told with humor and insight, this engaging history focuses mainly on the South Dakota town's most volatile years, between 1875 and 1925. The story of the gold rushes and busts that made Deadwood legendary underlines the nature of this complex town as a microcosm of American frontier life.

Back in Keith County *by John Janovy, Jr. (St. Martin's Press, New York, 1981; 179 pp., illus., $10.95).*
The author is a biology professor who raises thought-provoking questions through his reflections on the wildlife and human inhabitants of the Nebraska prairies.

Overland from Canada to British Columbia by Mr. Thomas McMicking of Queenston, Canada West, *edited by Joanne Leduc, with illustrations by William G. R. Hind (University of British Columbia Press, Vancouver, 1981; 121 pp., illus., map, appen., notes, biblio., index, $19.95).*
This 1862 journal vividly portrays the experiences of Thomas McMicking, elected leader of the largest single group of people ever to cross the Canadian prairies and Rocky Mountains to British Columbia. McMicking's sensitive personal narration of hardships and dangers forms a fascinating historical document as gripping as any adventure yarn. A number of delightful drawings and paintings made by a member of the party contribute to the charm and fascination of this book.

Shepherds' Compleat Early Nineteenth Century Woodworker *by Stephen A. and Victoria L. Shepherd (Green River Forge, Ltd., Roosevelt, Utah, 1981; 196 pp., illus., appen., biblio., $27.50).*
The publisher states that this is "not a how-to book but a how-twas book." It celebrates our ancestors' relationship to wood, and in the process creates a realistic picture of early nineteenth-century life. Descriptions of wood types, early tools and techniques, and pioneer furniture, enlivened by a number

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of old-fashioned drawings, should delight craftsworkers, collectors, museum conservators, and anyone with an interest in the legacy of the past.

The Ambidextrous Historian: Historical Writers and Writing in the American West *by C. L. Sonnichsen (University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 1981; 120 pp., notes, biblio., index, $9.95).*
Sonnichsen's lively essays discuss historical writing, research, and publishing, emphasizing the vital importance of a meaningful recorded past for people in the present day. He champions "grassroots historians"—untrained enthusiasts exploring family records and old newspapers—as essential to the revitalization of the study of history.

Vanishing Roadside America *by Warren H. Anderson (The University of Arizona Press, Tucson, 1981; 144 pp., illus., $14.95 paper).*
Those who can remember the neon signs for little roadside cafes, motels, and gas stations that were so much a part of an automobile vacation in the 1930s and 1940s will especially enjoy this book. Fifty-seven brightly-colored drawings, done originally in colored pencil, uniquely recreate the feeling of a more leisurely era that swiftly vanished in the face of interstate freeways and franchised fast-food stops.

Jumping Cholla: Genesis of a Bronze Sculpture *by Keith Christie (Northland Press, Flagstaff, Arizona, 1981; 67 pp., illus., glossary, $24.50 cloth, $16.95 paper).*
Step by step, hundreds of photographs show exactly how a Western bronze sculpture (of a horse and rider encountering a cholla cactus) is made, from the first sketching of the idea through clay model, rubber mold, wax copy, and the casting and finishing of the bronze.

The Battle for Butte: Mining and Politics on the Northern Frontier, 1864—1906 *by Michael P. Malone (University of Washington Press, Seattle, 1981; 281 pp., illus., notes, biblio., index, $17.95).*
Political and corporate maneuverings fill this absorbing, detailed account of the struggle among early-business giants to control the rich metal mines near Butte, Montana. Written for both the general reader and the professional historian, the book re-examines many aspects of a battle whose legacy of bitterness still casts a shadow over the mines of Montana.

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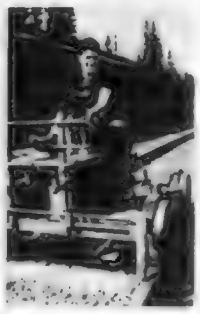

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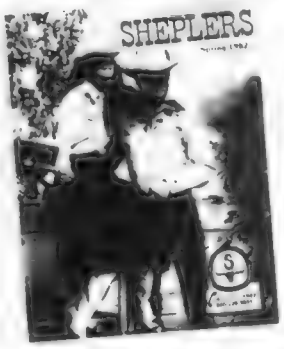

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SHEPLERS

Letters *(Continued from page 11)*

Had he used primary sources instead of Peggy Clifford's *To Aspen and Back*, a myopic book with serious errors of fact, Berry would have found a much more interesting and accurate account to report.

I was also disappointed to find that he omitted the valuable contributions that ski clubs made to the growth of the ski industry in the 1930s and early 1940s. I would suggest back issues of *The American Ski Annual* as a starting point for anyone interested in the true history of the development of America's ski resorts.

Tim Willoughby
Aspen, Colo.

Mennonites

Dear Editor:

I wish to thank AMERICAN WEST for publishing the article about Mennonites in its November/December 1981 issue. However it would have been nice if the author, Michael Wallis, had done a little more research about Mennonites before he wrote the article. The description Mr. Wallis gives of Mennonites being employed primarily as farmers or laborers and as people who never consider divorce or never go to psychiatrists would apply only to a small percentage of the 600,000 Mennonites in the world.

I graduated from a Mennonite high school fifteen years ago. Among the occupations of the approximately ninety graduates of that class who responded to our class reunion announcement this past year were 8 nurses, 4 social workers, 2 college professors, 5 secretaries, 4 respiratory therapists, and 5 teachers. Also included were a couple of missionaries, a couple of ministers, a mechanic, a truck driver, a welder, a parole officer, an artist, a building contractor, an editor as well as a couple of dozen housewives. Only 7 are farmers.

Mr. Wallis's description of Mennonites as primarily an ethnic group is a little misleading. It overlooks the fact that their faith, simplicity, and sense of responsibility to others is based on Biblical teaching. The reader gets the impression from the author that people are born Mennonite when, in spite of our European origins, at present growth rates the Mennonite population of the world, by the end of the century, will be primarily made up of Negroes, orientals, and Spanish-speaking people.

Leonard Nolt
Boise, Idaho

Olive Oatman

Dear Editor:

Please send me a copy of your March/April 1981 issue which carried the story of Olive Oatman.

My great grandfather, George Mateer, was a member of the company that left Independence, August 10, 1850, and is mentioned several times in "Captivity of the Oatman Girls," as is his son Charles.

Mrs. Lynn M. Latta
Yakima, Wash.

The West of Wieghorst

Dear Editor:

Thank you so much for informing us of the exhibition of Olaf Wieghorst's works in your Western Lookout in the September/October issue. He is my favorite current artist. The exhibition in Tucson was overwhelming—something I'll always remember.

I am still in the clouds. I wrote to Olaf Wieghorst and he invited me to his studio in El Cajon. Please publish more works from my adored artist.

The pictures and life of Alfred Jacob Miller are wonderful to see in the November/December issue. Thanks.

Mrs. E. Halter
San Rafael, Calif.

AMERICAN WEST welcomes letters from its readers. Some editing of letters may be necessary in order to print a cross section of those we receive within our limited space. Please address: Letters to the Editor, AMERICAN WEST, P.O. Box 40310, Tucson, Arizona 85717.

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Western Snapshots

A sunny day in 1909 found Seattle's Pioneer Square bustling with big-city activity. This small, triangular park, formed where Yesler Way comes together with several other unmatched streets, became the cable car terminal and the hub of early downtown Seattle. The pergola shown here sheltered commuters in bad weather and also served as the entrance to a large and elaborate public comfort station. Downstairs, travelers refreshed themselves in mosaic-tiled surroundings. Marbleized shoe-shine stands also did a brisk business underground.

Well-dressed businessmen in their derby hats and standard three-piece suits might take a moment to relax on the Square's benches before hurrying back to work at the surrounding offices. The two stylish ladies at the photo's center, about to step out onto the bricks of First Avenue, are adorned with sugar-loaf-crown hats. Perhaps the bearded gentleman next to them, with his fedora and Gladstone bag, had just arrived in Seattle for the Alaska Yukon Pacific Exposition then in progress.

In 1975 the United Parcel Service restored the pergola, recasting iron parts and replacing glass in the Italian-style structure. The underground comfort station is closed, but the ornate pergola once again proudly marks a reviving Pioneer Square as the heart of Seattle. Jan Evans of that city submitted this photo, which she says turned up recently in an old printer's shop on the Square.

AMERICAN WEST offers twenty-five dollars to any reader whose Western snapshot is accepted for publication on this page. We seek old photographs which tell stories of bygone times. Especially welcome are pictures depicting some forgotten aspect of Western life, serious or amusing. Space is limited: so, we have to be selective. We'll take good care of your pictures and return them promptly. Be sure to pack the snapshots carefully and enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Send submissions to AMERICAN WEST, Western Snapshots, P.O. Box 40310, Tucson, Arizona 85717.

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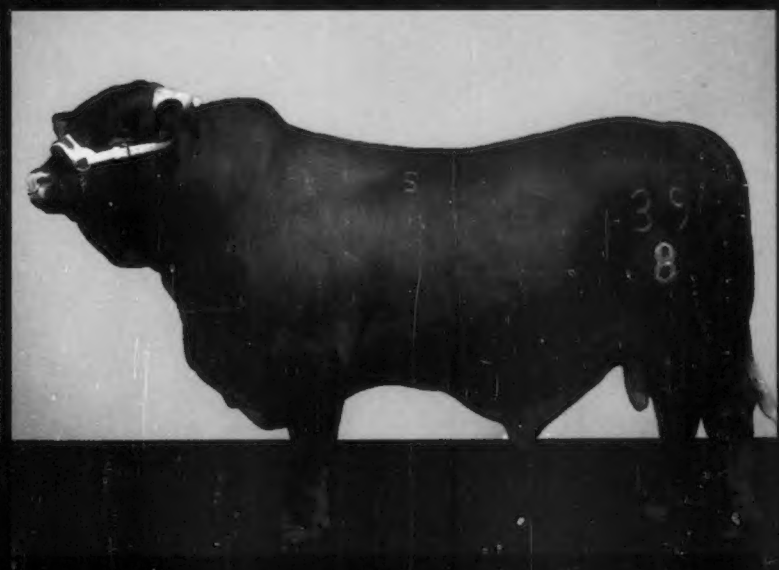
Right: "Return to Camp" by Paul Calle 32" x 48" Oil

Bottom Left: The mare Puro Quixote was sold for a high bid of $130,000 at the 1981 Western Heritage Sale.

Bottom Right: The bull Jomar 39/8 was sold for a high bid of $125,000 at the 1981 Western Heritage Sale.



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